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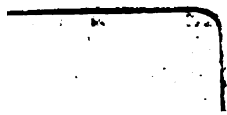
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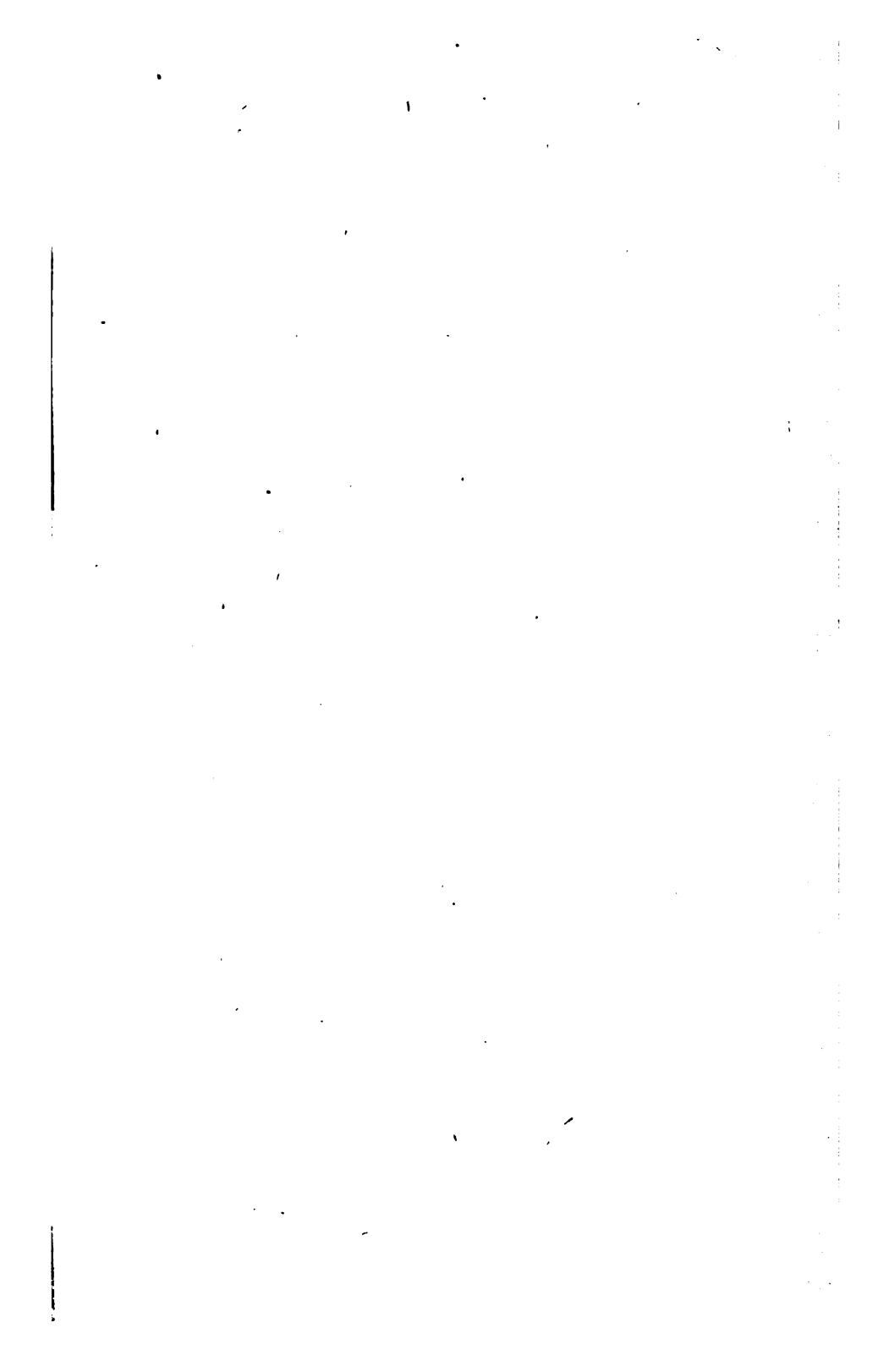


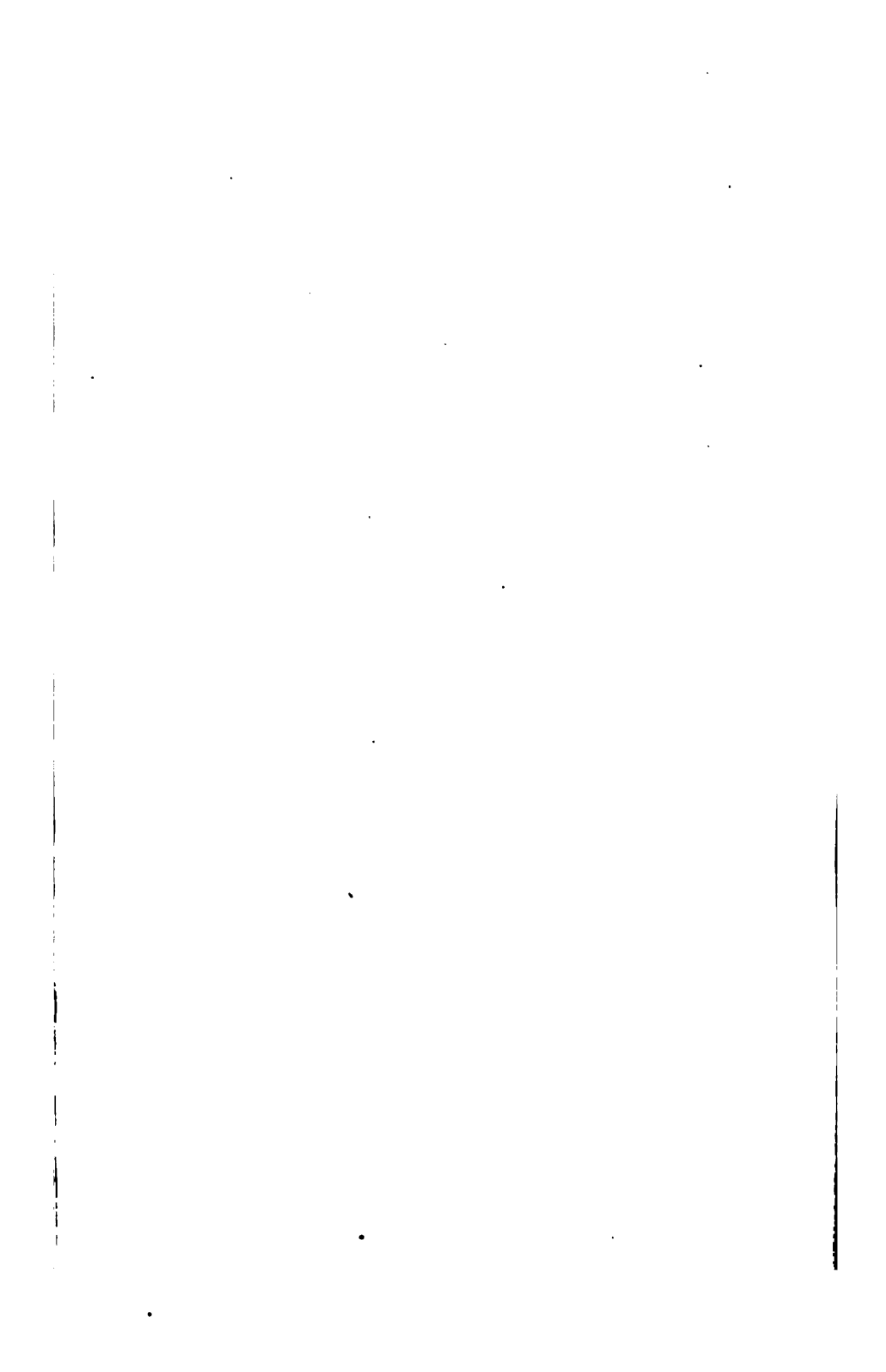
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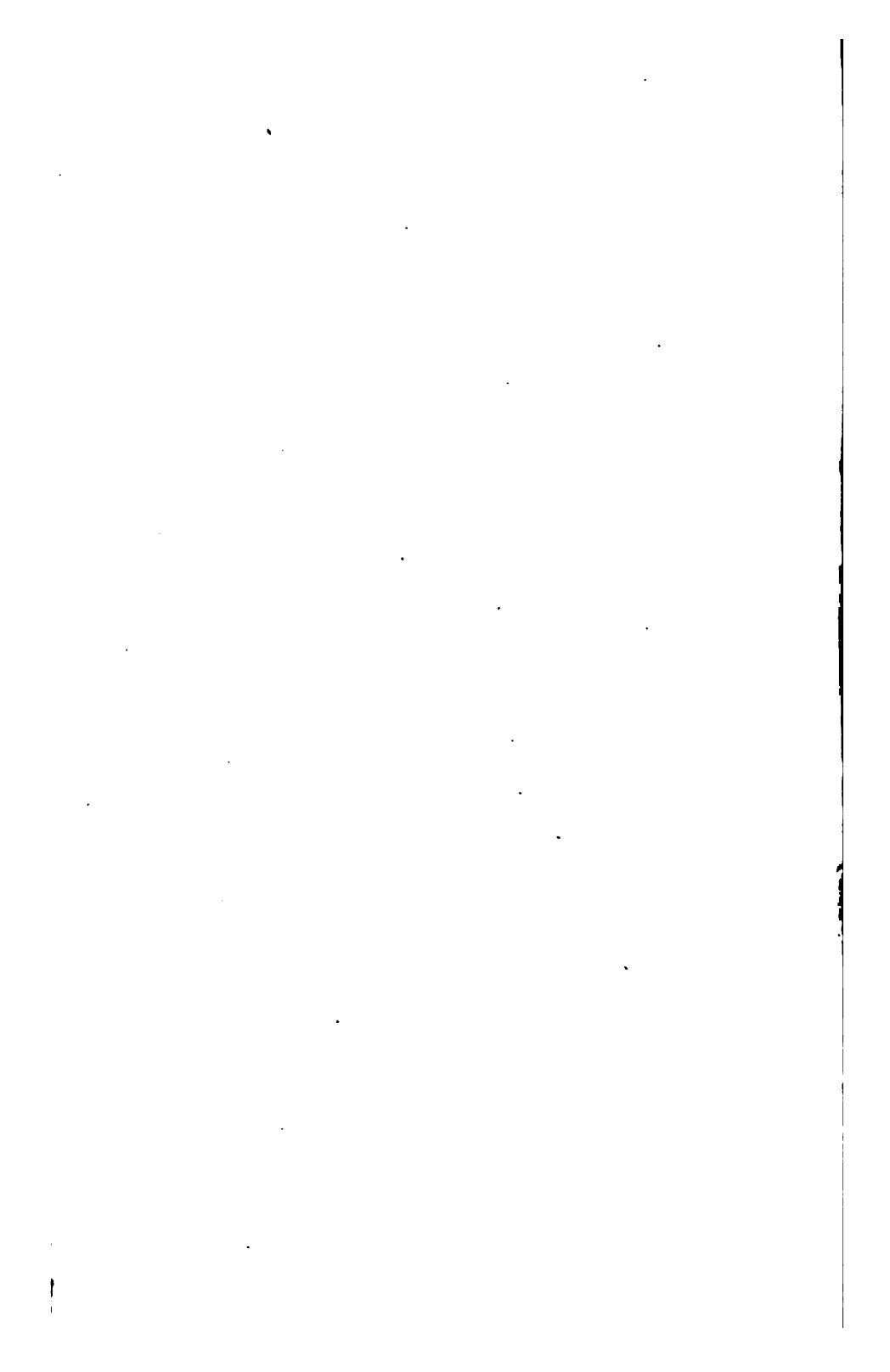


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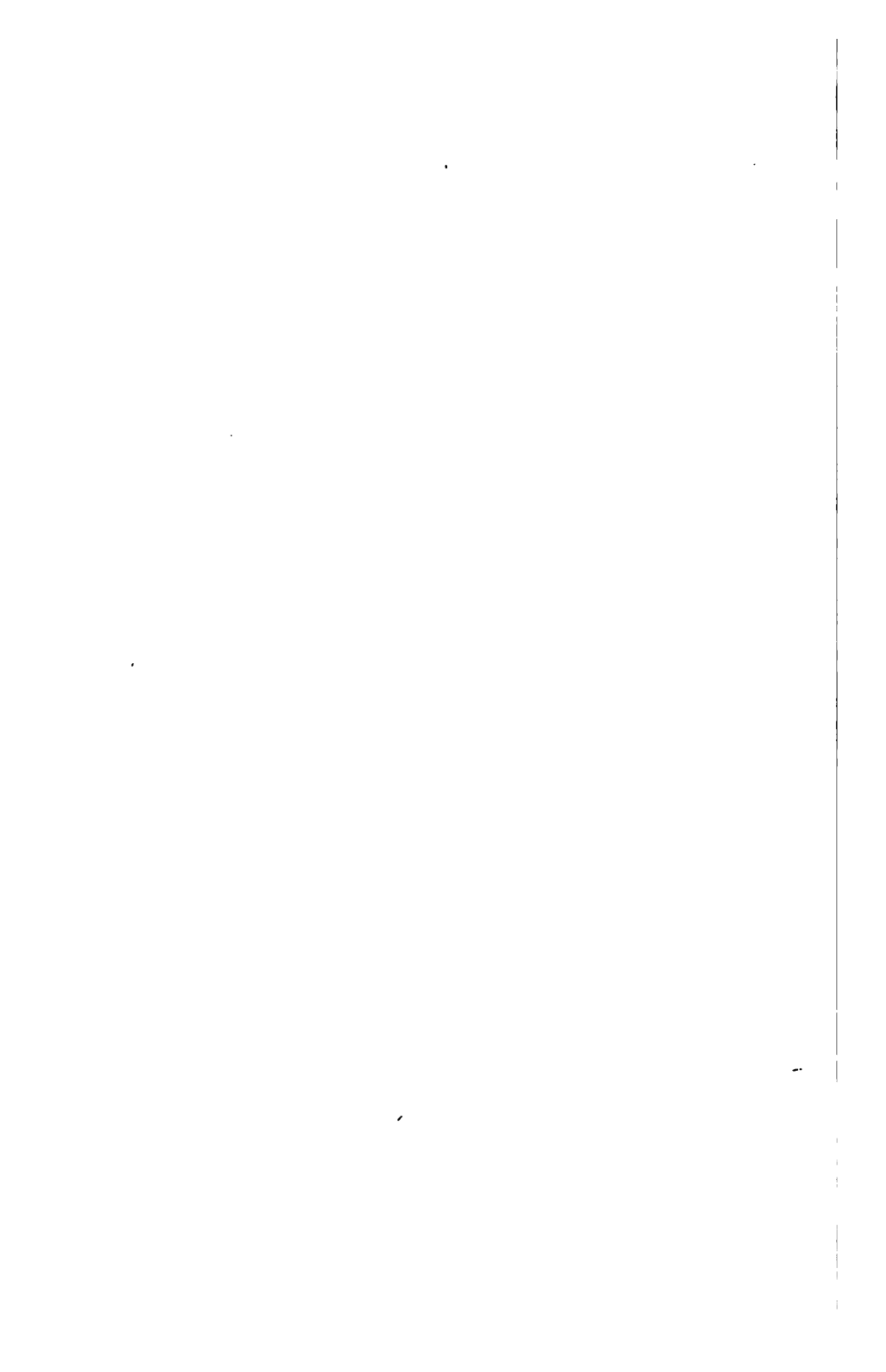
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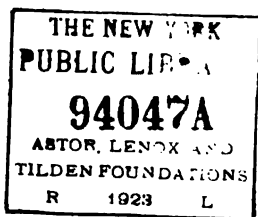
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THE ORIGINAL SECESSION MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1856.

THE COVENANT OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

Zech. iii. verses 6-7.

WE are exhorted to be sober and vigilant, because our adversary the Devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and to resist him stedfast in the faith. When Satan is permitted, he acts against men in the threefold character of tempter, accuser, and tormentor. If one looks through a telescope, with the large end turned to the eye, every object within the range of vision appears small and at a great distance; but let the glass be inverted, and the small end applied to the eye, then those objects which seemed so little and so far off, are now large and close upon the observer. This serves to illustrate some of Satan's devices against men. Acting as a tempter, he at first persuades them that sin is a very trifling offence, and that its punishment is light and at a great distance, and so easily avoided, that they have no reason to be afraid of it. Having drawn them into sin, and from one degree of iniquity to another, he begins to act as an accuser and a tormentor. He now attempts to overwhelm them with the view of the number, magnitude, and aggravations of their sins; and to drive them to despair, by persuading them that their iniquity is greater than can be forgiven.

The most eminent saints and servants of God, who are distinguished for gifts, grace, and usefulness in the Church, are the chief objects of Satan's malice. If he can find any thing against them, he accuses them before the Lord as persons unworthy of the honour put upon them, and unfit for the office and work with which they are intrusted. But the people of God have in the court of heaven an all-powerful Friend and Protector, who is able to answer all Satan's accusations, even when they are in some measure founded on truth. "For if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins."

These remarks are exemplified in the beginning of the third chapter of Zechariah. In the visions of God, the prophet saw "Joshua the high-priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing

at his right hand to resist him." Whatever was the particular charge brought against Joshua, Satan accuses him before the Lord as one polluted, and polluting the office of the priesthood, that he might obtain his dismissal. But the Lord Jesus Christ, as the advocate of Joshua, makes intercession for him against Satan, and pleads that the Father may rebuke the devourer, for his malicious accusation against one of God's elect. The charge brought against Joshua was not without foundation, for at the very time when he was accused, he was ministering in filthy garments,—the emblem of moral impurity. So prevalent, however, was the intercession of Christ in his behalf, that not only is Satan rebuked for his malice against a servant of the Lord, but also the ground of the accusation is completely removed by pardoning and sanctifying grace; in token of which, the Lord Jesus Christ commands his holy angels to take away his filthy garments, and to clothe him with change of raiment. All these external signs of spiritual and internal purity were performed under the superintendence of Christ, in answer to the prophet's request.

After the attack made upon his character, Joshua is not only acquitted and cleared; but also the covenant of the priesthood is renewed with him in verses 6 and 7: "And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places, to walk among these that stand by."

Here the Lord Jesus Christ, before whom Joshua stood and ministered—who acted as his intercessor—who caused his iniquity to pass from him, and clothed him with change of raiment, renews his covenant with him: "The angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua." This word *protested* is a term used in law, and signifies to make a solemn declaration in the presence of witnesses. In this instance, the protestation is made in the hearing of the prophet Zechariah, of the holy angels that stood by, and probably in the presence of Satan. It is equivalent to the usual solemn affirmation of Christ in the days of his personal ministry, "verily, verily, I say unto you." It is worthy of observation, however, that in this renovation of the covenant of the priesthood, though the Lord protested unto Joshua, he did not *swear* to him. This honour belongs exclusively to Christ himself, who was made a priest by the oath of God. This circumstance is particularly mentioned and interpreted by the Apostle Paul, in the seventh of the Epistle to the Hebrews, to signify the excellency and unchangeableness of the priesthood of Christ. And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made a priest (for those priests were made without an oath, but this with an oath, by him that said unto him, "The Lord swear and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedic,") by so much was Jesus made the surety of a better testament. "For the law maketh men high-priests who have infirmity; but the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

This protestation of Christ to Joshua was made by him, both in his own and Father's name, for it runs in these terms,—“Thus saith

the Lord of Hosts." This title, expressive of God's essential greatness and excellency, and of his sovereign authority, boundless dominion, and almighty power, is here intended to enforce the duties required of Joshua, and to confirm the promises made to him.

Such is the inviolable connection between duty and privilege, that the covenants into which God enters with men, cannot fail to have something of the form or appearance of a covenant of works, though, in reality, they are covenants of duty and of free promise, founded on the covenant of grace made with Christ. Thus, the national covenant which God made with Israel, in Ex. xix., looks like a covenant of works, because of the intimate connection between duty and privilege. "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me, above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." So does the covenant of royalty, made with David and his posterity, in Psalm cxvii.,—"If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony, that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore." The covenant of the priesthood made with Joshua has the same appearance,—“If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts; and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.”

The resemblance, however, which the covenants into which God enters with his people bear to a covenant of works, is only apparent, and not real, for “by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified”; and after we have done all, “we are unprofitable servants,” who have done no more than was our duty to do. God always speaks to his people in his Word as the God of grace; and in all the covenants which he makes with them, he transacts with them through the Mediator, and on the foundation of the New Covenant, made with Christ from all eternity. Thus, in speaking of the covenant made with Israel, the Apostle Paul declares that the law given to them “was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator”; and it was Christ himself, in the character of mediator, or of the angel of the Lord, that made this covenant with Joshua the high-priest. The duties required of him are not prescribed to him as a proper condition to entitle him to the promised blessings, but as obedience to the law, considered as a rule of life, according to which God delights that his people should walk; and the promises addressed to him are not exhibited as a debt due to him for his obedience, but only as its gracious encouragements and rewards.

Having made these remarks to prevent mistake, let us now attend to the terms of the covenant. It consists of duties and promises. The duties are two—“If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge.” The former is comprehensive of the whole of his conduct. The ways of God sometimes denote his own actings and procedure, both in his eternal counsels, and in his providential procedure. “His ways are everlasting.” “His way is in the sea, and his path in the mighty waters, and his footsteps are not known.” But here they signify his law, including all his commandments relating to his own

worship, and the duties we owe to ourselves and our neighbour. These are called his ways, because they are enjoined and exhibited to us in his Word to regulate our faith and obedience. To walk in his ways, is to aim at constant and universal obedience in thought, word, and deed, without turning aside to the right hand or to the left; and this obedience can be attained to only in the exercise of faith in Christ, and by grace and strength communicated to us by his Holy Spirit, according to that promise—"I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them."

The other duty is of a more special nature, and relates to his office as high-priest: "And if thou wilt keep my charge." God's charge includes all that pertains to the doctrine, worship, government, and discipline of his house; and this is called his charge, because he has committed it to the trust or custody of the office-bearers of his Church, and laid on them a solemn injunction to attend to it. The Epistles of Paul to Timothy were written that he might know how to behave himself in the house of God, and the same duties are enjoined on him in his private and public conduct, which are here prescribed to Joshua: "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy;" and again, "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust." Paul's exhortation to the elders of the Church of Ephesus is to the same purpose, "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

In connection with his obedience, the following promises are made to Joshua:—"Then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts; and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." These promises respect both his continuance in office and his own personal salvation. The promises which relate to his office are two: "Thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts." The former of these denotes that, as the gracious reward of his obedience or good behaviour, he should continue to preside over the house of God, as chief ruler or governor; and the latter, that he should continue to minister to the Lord in holy things at his altar and in his sanctuary;—while both indicate that the office of the priesthood should be continued in his family so long as the Old Testament dispensation lasted. The promise which relates to his personal salvation is the following: "And I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." The highly privileged ones here referred to, are holy angels, who minister in the immediate presence of God, and are said, in the 4th verse of this chapter, to stand before the angel of the Lord; also the Church of the first-born, consisting of glorified saints, or the spirits of just men made perfect, "who are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." This promise, therefore, assures him, that, as another gracious and higher reward of his obedience and fidelity, the Lord would not only admit him to communion with him on earth, but also receive him into his heavenly kingdom, and give him a distinguished place in the blessed society of angels and saints, to engage in the exalted services and enjoy the pure delights of the upper sanctuary. In the book of the

Revelation, the redeemed are represented as nearest the throne, and surrounded by an innumerable company of angels, employed along with them in celebrating the praises of the three-one God, and beholding and admiring the glory of Christ.

This whole protestation of Christ to Joshua very much resembles the injunctions and promises addressed by the Apostle Peter to the office-bearers of the New Testament Church,—“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory which shall be revealed. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a ready mind: neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock; and, when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away.” It was therefore fitted to sustain him in the whole course of his ministry, in terms of the Covenant made with him, and to inspire him in his latter days with the confident hope expressed by Paul in these words: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give unto me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing.”

As Joshua was, so we must be pardoned and sanctified to fit us for the service of God, and the enjoyment of him. Our filthy garments of sin and self-righteousness must be taken away, and we must be clothed with change of raiment by the imputed righteousness of Christ and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, that we may be cleared from Satan's accusations, and be admitted to the service of God and the enjoyment of him. Unless the conscience be purged from dead works, we cannot serve the living God; and if we regard iniquity in our heart, the Lord will not hear us.

They who faithfully serve God, by walking in his ways and keeping his charge, shall be honoured with his high approbation on earth, and rewarded with eternal life in heaven. “He will give them places to walk among these that stand by.” This reward of holy obedience is altogether of grace to us; but it is not the less certain that it is free. There is a double certainty that the reward shall be bestowed which Christ has merited for his people, and which is graciously promised to all that obey him. “Ye are they that have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.”

OF PSALMODY.*

DECLARATION.

We declare, That it is the will of God that the songs contained in the book of Psalms, be sung in his worship, both public and private,

* This very able illustration and defence of the exclusive use of an inspired Psalmody in the public worship of God, is extracted from an Overture of a Testimony

to the end of the world; and in singing God's praise, these songs should be employed to the exclusion of the devotional compositions of uninspired men.

Argument and Illustration.

This Declaration is in accordance with the Confession of Faith, chap. xxi., secs. 1 and 5; Shorter Catechism, Ques. 51; Larger Catechism, Ques. 109; and Directory for the Public Worship of God.

Although the Declaration we have just made on this subject is in opposition to the statements and practices of many, even of those who profess an adherence to the Confession of Faith, we believe it to be in accordance with the authority of God's word.

This Declaration affirms it to be the will of God, that the songs contained in the book of Psalms should be used by the Church of Christ. In testifying in behalf of this, we, of course, are to be understood as speaking of the use of the Psalms in the formal worship of God. Now, the word of God is the only source to which we can apply in order to ascertain his will. In the light of this word, we urge in favour of the use of these Psalms:—(1.) God has given them as a book of psalms. They were composed by the inspiration of God (2 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Pet. i. 21; 2 Sam. xxiii. 2;) and, of course, were given by God. We have said that they were given as a *book of psalms*. They are expressly so called in the New Testament (Luke xx. 42; Acts i. 20.) Our argument, then, is—The book of Psalms, whence was it? From heaven, or of men? If from heaven, why not use it? (Matt. xxi. 25.) (2.) The title given to David, their penman, indicates that it is the will of God that they should be used by the Church. He is called “the sweet psalmist of Israel” (2 Sam. xxiii. 1.) (3.) They are called “the songs of the Lord” (1 Chron. xxv. 7); which, like the expressions, “table of the Lord,” “supper of the Lord,” “day of the Lord,” implies divine authority and appointment. (4.) They are called “the songs of Zion” (Ps. cxxxvii. 3), which implies that they were designed for the use of the Church. (5.) God's worshipping people, under the former dispensation, were directed to sing them (1 Chron. xvi. 4, 7; 2 Chron. xxix. 30; Ps. cv. 2; Ps. lxxxi. 2); and they sang them after their captivity. (Neh. xii. 24.) These directions and examples are still in force, as there is in the New Testament no intimation to the contrary. (6.) These commands are renewed in the New Testament (Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; James v. 13.) (7.) They were most probably sung by our Lord and his disciples at the institution of the Lord's Supper (Matt. xxvi. 30); the Jews made use of them at the passover, on which occasion the Lord's Supper was instituted. Here the argument is the same as we have for the observance of the first day of the week as the Sabbath. These considerations fully establish the truth of our Declaration, that the songs contained in the book of Psalms should be sung in the worship of God.

which has been drawn up by a Committee of the Associate Synod of North America, as a basis of union with the Associate Reformed Synod, which, after some amendments, has been approved by the Associate Synod, and has been sent to their brethren of the Associate Reformed Church.

We have also declared that they should be employed, to the exclusion of the devotional compositions of uninspired men. The truth of this part of our Declaration follows as a necessary consequence, unless it can be shown that God himself has authorized the use of such compositions. For it is not only the doctrine of our Confession that "the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will," but the doctrine of the word of God (Deut. xii. 32; Lev. x. 1-3; Matt. xv. 9.) The simple question, then, is—Have we divine authority for the use of the compositions of uninspired men in the worship of God? It is alleged that we have such authority in the directions of the apostle to sing, not only "psalms," but "hymns and spiritual songs" (Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16.) In order that the authority sought for may be found in this verse, it must be shown with the terms, "hymns" and "spiritual songs," are designed to indicate compositions differing from those referred to by the name "psalms," as the compositions of uninspired men differ from those of inspired men. This, however, cannot be shown. It does not appear in the fact that a variety of terms is employed; for we know that the Scriptures often, under a variety of names, refer, in the same place, to that which has been appointed by God, as "statutes," "judgments," "ordinances," and "commandments" (Ex. xv. 26; Deut. xxvii. 10; 2 Sam. xxii. 23; Ex. xviii. 20; 2 Kings xxiii. 3.) It does not appear in the names, "hymns" and "songs;" for these names correspond to the Hebrew names *Tehilla* and *Shir*, which are applied along with *Mismor*, (a psalm,) to some of the inspired Psalms. The whole collection is called, in Hebrew, *Sepher Tehillim*, the Book of Hymns. The Septuagint version of the Old Testament—the version that was in use in the times of the apostle—applies to some of the inspired Psalms the very terms, "hymns" and "songs," which the apostle employs; and Josephus, and other writers, refer to the Psalms of David under the name of "songs" and "hymns." It is, therefore, utterly impossible to *prove* the distinction claimed, and consequently to find in the passages authority for the use of any other compositions but the psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs of inspiration.

But not only is there a lack of authority in these passages, but there are several considerations which are conclusive against the supposition of such a distinction as the one sought. (1.) It is known that there was an inspired collection of psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, in existence at that time. (2.) We have no command to make hymns or songs for the worship of God, or the least hint that would infer that the Church possessed such a right. (3.) It is not probable that the Ephesians and Colossians would, at that time, be qualified for such a service, as they had been lately converted from idolatry. (4.) The Jews would, in all probability, have opposed the use of any thing else but the inspired collection, having been from their childhood accustomed to their use. (5.) It is not likely that the apostle would thus place the word of God and the word of man upon a par, by directing them both to be used for the same end. (6.) If we make the distinction which is alleged to exist between *psalms* and *hymns*, we must make a

distinction equally great between *hymns* and *spiritual songs*. (7.) These songs are called spiritual, which word implies that the Spirit of God is their author (1 Cor. x. 3, 4; Rom. vii. 14; 1 Cor. iii. 1; xv. 44, 46; Eph. i. 3; Gal. vi. 1; Col. i. 9, &c.) (8.) They are to be used as a means of being "filled with the Spirit;" to this end the words of inspiration are peculiarly adapted. (9.) We are to sing them as a means of "letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly"—language which will apply more appropriately to the inspired Psalms than to any human composition. In view of these considerations, these two passages of the New Testament Scriptures are to be regarded as an apostolic injunction to praise God, by means of those psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, which He himself had given to his Church. In making use of any thing else, we are doing that for which we have no warrant, and against the expressed will of Him to whom alone it belongs to say in what way, and by what means, he shall be worshipped. We, therefore, solemnly testify against the use of uninspired compositions in the worship of God.

In testifying for the use of an inspired psalmody, we, of course, make no reference to any particular version. We should use the most faithful that can be obtained. It is for the use of the book of Psalms, in a faithful translation, whether it be in measured or unmeasured lines, and against the use of a mere imitation or loose paraphrase of these Psalms, or the use of a religious song, composed by man, that we testify.

The evils which have followed the exclusion of an inspired psalmody from the worship of God, and the arguments which have been urged by many of the advocates of the practice which we condemn (indicating, as they often do, a disregard of Divine authority, or a want of reverence for the Scriptures, and low views in relation to their inspiration), only impress us the more deeply with a sense of the importance of maintaining this ordinance in its purity.

WITCHCRAFT.

THIS evil, which, it is cause of lamentation, is still receiving more or less countenance in Christian countries, is a part of Paganism. It was extensively practised, in different forms, in ancient times, among heathen nations—which are charged by the Spirit with being worshippers of devils—and the belief of the power of man, through the aid of evil spirits, and the use of charms, still prevails among the degraded tribes of the heathen in different parts of the world. It is not intended to enter at present upon any general discussion on this subject, but to furnish our readers with some brief extracts from high authorities, tending to show the light in which it has been contemplated by the best divines.

The following striking instance of faith in this, among the heathen tribes of South Africa, is given by Moffat, in his *Missionary Labours and Scenes* :—

"The following ludicrous circumstance once happened, and was related to the

writer by a native in graphic style. Two men had succeeded in stealing an iron pot. Having just taken it from the fire, it was rather warm for handling conveniently over a fence, and by doing so, it fell on a stone and was cracked. "It is iron," said they, and off they went with their booty, resolving to make the best of it, that is, if it would not serve for cooking, they would transform it into knives and spears. After some time had elapsed, and the hue and cry about the missing pot had nearly died away, it was brought forth to a native smith, who had laid in a stock of charcoal for the occasion. The pot was farther broken to make it more convenient to lay hold of with the tongs, which are generally of the bark of a tree. The native vulcan, unacquainted with cast-iron, having with his small bellows, one in each hand, produced a good heat, drew a piece from the fire. To his utter amazement, it flew into pieces at the first stroke of his little hammer. Another and another piece was brought under the action of the fire, and then under the hammer, with no better success. Both the thief and the smith, gazing with eyes and mouth dilated on the fragments of iron scattered round the stone anvil, declared their belief that the pot was bewitched, and concluded pot-stealing to be a bad speculation."

Witchcraft—What it is ?—"Witchcraft," says Scott in his commentary, "is generally understood to mean 'a compact with evil spirits, by whose agency and assistance, applied for by certain incantations, effects of various kinds may be produced, by which malice, or covetousness, or other corrupt passions may be gratified.'"

It is not necessary that this compact should be formal. Persons enter into an implicit and virtual compact with the devil when they go to his school—when they go to those who, by tradition or otherwise, pretend to be able to tell them what rules or charms to use, in order to obtain Satanic aid for any object; when, after being so instructed, they proceed to use these arts, and when Satan on his part declares his acceptance of their worship, by granting, so far as he is able and is permitted, what they seek. Some have imagined that they are warranted to use evil arts to meet or counteract the effects of these, from which they suppose that they are suffering by Satan's aid. But this can be no valid excuse for going to such a quarter for succour. This is to deny the power of God to restrain the power of the devil and protect us from all his efforts to do us wrong. It is virtually to exalt Satan above God, and to bow down before him as the god of this world.

The reality of Witchcraft unquestionable.—"But it seems," says the same able commentator, "one of the most flagrant absurdities of modern Sadduceism, to suppose that God himself would repeatedly command the magistrates of his people to punish with death a crime which never was committed! If it should be said, that mere pretences to witchcraft might warrant laws against it; I would only desire the reader to examine the following references, and judge for himself, whether it be not spoken of in Scripture as a real practice. Lev. xix. 26-31; xx. 6-27—Deut. xviii. 10-11—1 Sam. xxviii. 3-9—Is. xix. 3—Acts viii. 9-11; xvi. 16-19; xix. 19—Gal. v. 20. The existence, sagacity, malice, ambition, and power of evil spirits, are sufficiently declared in Scripture. There can be no doubt that they are both able and willing thus to interpose, if permitted; and that human nature is capable of such wickedness, as even *knowingly* to combine with them. That witchcraft may be, that it hath been, and that it still is, in some

parts of the world, actually practised, seems capable of proof, were any collateral evidence necessary to confirm the truth of the divine testimony. But as, by certain degrees of cultivation, wild beasts are banished or extirpated; so, in some stages of civilization, the practice of witchcraft is nearly excluded. The truth is this, in such circumstances it no longer so well answers Satan's grand purpose of deception and destruction: he therefore changes his ground, and varies his attack; nor is he any loser, by exchanging the practice of witchcraft for the prevalence of scepticism."

The evil of Witchcraft.—"A vast variety of practices," says the same author, "with different degrees of aggravation, agree, in common with witchcraft, in avowedly making Satan the god of this world, and the god of those who thus apply to him for information or assistance." "Astrological calculations, or other attempts at prediction or fortune-telling; the use of spells and charms for curing diseases; with many other practices too frequent among professing Christians, are attempts to revive this worship of Satan, and should be abhorred as his very ordinance; being *means used* to get help and information *elsewhere*, instead of depending on God, submitting to him, and waiting for all needful good from him in the use of lawful means." "This expression (Levit. xx. 6.) still further proves, that consulting with men or women who practice or pretend to witchcraft in any form, is a real act of idolatry and of worshipping the devil."—*Ibid.*

"Witchcraft," says Henry, "not only gives that honour to the devil which is due to God alone, but bids defiance to the Divine Providence, wages war with God's government, puts his work into the devil's hands, expecting him to do good and evil, and so making him indeed 'the god of this world.'"

"What greater madness can there be than for a man to go to a liar for information, and to an enemy for advice? They do so who run after those that deal in the *black art*, and *know the depths of Satan*. This is spiritual adultery as much as idolatry is,—giving that honour to the devil which is due to God only; and the jealous God will give a bill of divorce to those that thus go a whoring from him, and will cut them off, they having first cut themselves off, from him."—*Ibid.* on Levit. xx. 6.

It is the comfort of Christians, that all evil spirits are under the absolute control of their divine Lord and Saviour, that they can do nothing without his permission, and that, under the shield of his Almighty protection, they are in perfect safety, however many enemies, either in the form of wicked men or fallen spirits, may be leagued against them. If God be for them who can be against them?

(To the Editor of the Original Secession Magazine.)

REV. SIR,—Having learned that my former letter upon "Common abuses in connection with attendance upon Divine Ordinances," has

been productive of reformation in some localities, I feel encouraged to pursue the subject. Admitting that it may not be palatable to some, who especially require to be informed upon these matters, I feel convinced, that those who are the true worshippers of a Holy God, will not be offended with the explicit condemnation of any practice which tends to mar the exercise of fellow-christians, and to grieve the Spirit of God. The delicacy of the subject, as bearing upon the habits of individuals, has frequently prevented Gospel ministers from warning against, and reproving, glaring violations of the law of the Sabbath, and notorious breaches of Christian propriety. Indeed, there is reason to fear, that in many cases the *nature* and *duties* of public worship have not been sufficiently exhibited in the light of the sacred Scriptures. In the regulation of all that pertained to Jewish ordinances, there was evidently regard to every circumstance which might tend to solemnize the mind, and regulate the feelings of approaching worshippers. The recorded judgments measured out to such as made an irreverent approach to sacred things, are a fearful comment upon the guilt of those who, with clearer light, and more exalted privileges, are yet found trifling with the divine institutions of New Testament observance. The typical ordinances have been superseded by purer and more perfect forms of religious homage; but there is no change in the character of the object worshipped, no abrogation of the Sabbath law, no abatement of that holiness which pervaded the ancient sanctuary, and no admission of less solemnity, or spirituality, on the part of Gospel worshippers. The nature of New Testament worship is clearly defined by the Redeemer, when announcing that approaching transition from perverted Jewish ceremonies to spiritual homage,—“The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. GOD IS A SPIRIT: AND THEY THAT WORSHIP HIM, MUST WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.*

The House of God, under the Christian dispensation, retains all the spiritual characteristics which belonged to the Jewish sanctuary. The ceremonial institutions have vanished, but only to make room for a more enlarged spirituality. Hence the warning addressed to the ancient Israelites comes home with equal emphasis to every Christian worshipper,—“*Keep thy foot when thou goest to the House of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.*”

I have no design to expound this text in the form of a letter. It is introduced as a subject of meditation to those who wait upon divine ordinances, and as the Spirit's testimony against the evils to which attention is solicited. These may be presented in the form of local classification, embracing, Common abuses—by the way to God's House—around the doors of the Sanctuary—in the pew—in the desk—and in the Pulpit.

I. *Abuses by the way to God's House.* Whatever may be the dis-

* John iv. 23, 24.

tance of approaching worshippers, the journey is in all respects a *Sabbath journey*. The Divine commandment,—“Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy,” is addressed to all, and to those who go up to Mount Zion as emphatically as to any other. All the circumstances with which public ordinances are associated, tend to deepen the impression made by the announcement of the law. The stillness of the day, as freed from the bustling cares of the week and the momentous questions bearing upon man's eternal destiny, are well calculated to subdue the spirit of levity, and awaken the deepest interest in prospect of meeting that God who had said, “I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me.” Could anything be better calculated to arrest the current of worldly thoughts, common to the cares and business of the week, than a near approach into the presence of the Searcher of hearts. And yet, alas! the very opposite of all this is too frequently the experience of travellers to Mount Zion. Is it not a fact, that the state of the weather—the appearance of the crops, and the progress of the seasons, furnish tempting subjects for many in the country; while in the city, the prospects of commerce—the revival or the depression of trade, and the varied aspects of political movements, present an exhaustless theme for thoughtless worshippers. And even when there may be little interest in public questions—where agriculture and commerce are completely forgotten—there is often the introduction of local gossip, and even questions of ecclesiastical polity, which are discussed in the most worldly spirit, and which must, notwithstanding their relation to the Church, be placed in the category of carnal conversation. There is perhaps not a day in the week in which envy burns keener, or in which private and public character suffers more at the hand of heartless detractors. Let it therefore be set down as a permanent rule, that whatever is not spiritual in *itself*, and whatever is not spiritual in the mind that reflects upon, or speaks of it—whatever is not God-glorifying, on the way to His sanctuary, is dishonouring to His name, and hurtful to immortal souls. How much need, on leaving our dwellings, to breathe the prayer of David—“Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips. Incline not my heart to any evil thing.”

Another evil, by the way, is making merchandise. This may seem at first sight very unusual; but observation and testimony will convince any candid inquirer, that the evil is flagrant, and lamentably common.* How common, in the former days of open dramshops, to

* It appears from public notices in some of the newspapers, and also in some of the Church courts, that in the city of Glasgow there are *upwards of a thousand places* open on Sabbath for the purpose of traffic, and that the practice is widening and extending from day to day. But this evil is not confined to Glasgow—it is found prevailing in all the cities of the kingdom. It requires firmness and holy resolution on the part of shopkeepers in some localities to resist the applications for purchases which are made on the Sabbath. It is fondly hoped that few Original Seceders are chargeable in any way with encouraging such a profanation of the Lord's day. But as ancient Israel mingled with the heathen, and learned of them their ways, the best are still in danger of being led to copy evil example, and of yielding to temptation. This remark applies also to some of the other abuses exposed in this paper. But all need to be more careful of their words and deeds, and to have their eyes more turned from viewing vanity than they are on God's holy day.

find persons on the way to public ordinances turning in to these Sabbath-profaning temples of Bacchus? Thanks to modern legislation for the attempt made to wipe away this national disgrace! But what shall be said of those who would look with contempt upon such as enter the public house, while they themselves are ready to enter the apothecary hall, or the half-closed door of the confectionery, that they may provide luxuries to be used personally, or divided with their friends in the house of God? The business transaction may be confined to a few "coppers"; but what is the difference in the sight of God between pounds and pence? The Redeemer, while on earth, recognized the two mites of the widow when cast into the treasury of the LORD, and will not the LORD of the Sabbath discover the profanation of his day by the halfpenny or penny transaction? For whom are many of the apothecary and confectionery shops opened on Sabbath? I hesitate not to say, that it is for church-going customers! Hear the testimony of a candid youth, employed in an apothecary's hall in one of the most religious of our cities, who confessed to the writer, "That for every three shillings' worth of necessary medicine dispensed upon Sabbath, he sold three pounds' worth of confections,—the greater portion of which were purchased by parties going to, or returning from Church!" Such parties little think, while enjoying their unnecessary luxuries in the sanctuary, that they are sacrificing the Sabbaths of the rising youth of the medical profession, or that they are lending their aid to perpetuate a system calculated to infidelize those who shall become the future guardians of health! To such Sabbath profaners the solemn warning addressed to the backsliding Israelites is peculiarly appropriate,—“But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath-day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.”

Another abuse common to the way, is the *improper use* of public or private vehicles in going to, or returning from church. That such may be legitimately employed, either as personal property, or hired for the occasion, cannot be disputed, where necessity or mercy may require them. But the abuses are, using them for show, hiring them on Sabbath, and employing them without regard to time, so that drivers and other servants are prevented from attending the worship of God.

I have chiefly adverted to those more prominent abuses common in going up to the sanctuary. Indeed, it might reasonably be supposed, that those who have been hearing the words of eternal life—who have by profession been holding communion with the Father of Spirits—would be in little danger of transgressing the Sabbath law in returning from the house of God. But, alas! the experience of every Sabbath testifies to the contrary. Those who have a propensity for local gossip have their mental cravings excited, and, consequently, their tongues set in motion, by the sight of fellow-worshippers, or even by their unwonted absence. The votaries of fashion find a temptation in the introduction of a new bonnet, or the exhibition of the last impor-

tation in the style of a garment ; and hence, to such, the criticism of an individual in a peculiar dress forms the chief topic of conversation by the way. There is another class, found travelling in the same altitude, though ready to reprove and condemn the last-mentioned Sabbath profaners—I mean the self-conceited critics, whose whole conversation turns upon the defections of churches, the faults of ministers, and the failings of professors. I do not mean to say, that Christians may not profitably meditate upon the backslidings of the Church, or that sincere worshippers ought not to speak by the way of abounding iniquity, so that their hearts may be the more deeply affected with the “afflictions of Joseph ;” but what I condemn is, that pharisaical spirit which is ready to say, “God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are,”—as this or that worshipper who may be going in another direction,—not from a sense of gratitude to the God of ordinances, but from natural pride, fostered and cherished by a distinguished profession. To such, no character is sacred, provided an opportunity occurs for personal exaltation. In the lips of such, wholesale condemnation of churches and ministers seems peculiarly palatable, while there is not a shadow of sorrow for the dishonour done to God, nor a prayer breathed for their reformation. And yet this frequently passes for religious conversation. In other cases of the same censorious stamp, it assumes the form of criticism, directed against the minister whom they have just been hearing. Did I say hearing the minister ? This unguarded expression discloses the secret of that liberty which is taken so freely with his message. Having had no higher motive than hearing the minister, it is quite natural that such should have no higher subject than the composition of the sermon, or the manner in which it was delivered. Had such gone to hear what God the LORD would speak unto his people, the gestures of the servant would have been forgotten in the presence of his Master, and the defects of the earthen vessel would have been overlooked in the participation of the pure water of life. But having never risen higher in their homage than the feeble instrument, it is not to be wondered, that, like filthy flies, they should light upon the sores, while buzzing rapidly over the portions characterized by health and beauty. Such critics “consider not that they do evil things,” though they are doing effectually the work of that wicked one whom the Saviour describes as catching away the sown word. A cold intellectual critic among a little band of returning worshippers, is a *moral icicle*, producing the chill of spiritual death, even where there may be a shaking among the dry bones. The presence of an iceberg among the waving fields of an August harvest, would not be more ungenial than the presence of such detractors must ever be among the true disciples of Christ. The criticism of sermons by the way is peculiarly dangerous to the young. The minds of such gospel hearers are more easily awakened ; but how chilling the effect of a cool criticism, while their own hearts are burning with the arrows of conviction, or the exhibitions of divine love. I can suppose a youth, retiring in company with one *too wise* to be taught by the gospel minister, and *too proud* to admit that he has been affected by anything said,—having his mind deeply solemnized by the views presented of

sin, of judgment, of eternity, or of the love of God in the work of redemption. To his more experienced fellow-traveller he is found saying, "That was a very solemn sermon." Thus opening the door, that the message of the minister may be re-echoed from the heart of a fellow-worshipper melted like his own. But he only receives in reply a cool criticism of both minister and sermon, such as the following,— "Yes, it was a good sermon, but he has a hateful accent! I wonder why he twists himself so much in delivery! If he had studied elocution a little better he might have been a very acceptable preacher! He can move the feelings, but he has little idea of a logical division. I don't think he is well acquainted with the system of Divinity, else he would have introduced this or that topic. He may do well enough *here*, but he would produce little impression in a city, where *intelligent* congregations are accustomed to finished productions. I am glad, however, that his people seem to like him; but they are not accustomed to anything else. For my part, I would like something better studied—something *original*, that would elevate the mind above those common-place topics." Under this, or such as this, the devotional feelings of the awakened youth have vanished. His reasoning powers are set to work, not upon the demerit of sin, the depths of guilt, or the condescension of that God who says, "Come now and let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," but upon the manner of the preacher, upon the structure of the discourse, and upon the defects in composition. He comes down from the high questions between God and his immortal soul, to the mere capabilities of the minister, in regard to pleasing his audience or filling his church. Such criticism embodies more than Sabbath profanation,—it not unfrequently strikes at the wisdom and goodness of Christ the Head, who prepares and disposes of his servants as seemeth best in accordance with the circumstances of his Church and people.

Let Christians, then, beware of these abuses by the way. They are like dead flies in the apothecary's ointment—"little foxes that spoil the vines." To avoid them, preparation of heart is necessary before going up to God's house, and solemn meditation on the subject presented while retiring. The recollection that the Sabbath is holy throughout,—that God sees us by the way as well as in his house,—that all spiritual work must be performed in a spiritual frame,—will tend much to keep our thoughts directed to the God of ordinances, and lead us to plead with the Psalmist, "Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go in to them, and I will praise the Lord. . . . This is the day which the Lord hath made: we will be glad and rejoice in it." Let those who walk together take sweet counsel in regard to the things of God, and let those who retire in company remember where they have been, and what they have experienced; then, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak of things honouring to God, and edifying to the souls of men.

In commencing this letter, I designed to dismiss this topic in a few sentences. But evil appears in its real magnitude when viewed in the light of the divine law. I have, therefore, put down my thoughts

at length, retaining for future communication the discussion of those other abuses alluded to in the introduction. If you consider these observations worthy of a place, my views upon the remaining points shall be forthcoming in due time. Meanwhile, I solicit the calm consideration of the preceding observations, under the solemn conviction that some sin wilfully, and others are led by inadvertency to dishonour God, by indulging in the practices condemned.

REFORMATOR.

EXTRACT.

STRIKING INSTANCE OF THE EFFECTS OF THE GOSPEL AS AN ANTIDOTE TO INTEMPERANCE.

In the narrative of James Haldane's tour in the West of Scotland, as quoted in the "Lives of the Waldenses," the following anecdote is furnished:—"We preached," says Mr Campbell, the narrator of the facts, "near the spot where Mr Haldane and I landed two years before, when only about three persons came to hear; now we had a congregation of upwards of four hundred—the effect of Mr Macallum's labours among them. On leaving them, about a dozen of people walked on each side of my horse, telling what miserable creatures they were when first I visited their country. One said he then acted as fiddler at all the dancing weddings round about, which he immediately gave up when his eyes were opened. . . . An aged grey-headed man then said—'I was at that time chairman of a whisky-toddy meeting, that regularly met for the purpose of drinking whisky and water in the evenings. After Mr Macallum came among us, one ceased to attend, then another and another did the same, till I was left alone in the chair. I began then to wonder what it could be that they liked better than drinking good Highland whisky. This determined me to go and see: so I went and attended the ministry of our friend, and also found that which I liked better than whisky-toddy.' Thus the chair was vacated, and the meeting dissolved, by the force of gospel truth."—*Lives of Robert and James Haldane*, p. 267.

AMERICAN SLAVERY—A PROBLEM.

SLAVERY is in itself a flagrant violation of the eternal law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." It is a system of oppression and wrong. As it exists in the United States of America, it is peculiarly aggravated. It is so by the clear light in the midst of which it is practised—by the professions of respect to liberty made by those who cruelly rob their fellows of this part of their dearest birth-right in disregard of example and remonstrance—and as sanctioned by law and enforced by the authority and power of a mighty and highly-privileged and enlightened people. It is not possible to calculate the amount of wrong that is committed by this on unoffending persons in as far as their oppressors are concerned. The cry of this has reached and is reaching to heaven as certainly as the cry of the sin of Sodom did. The extent in which this grievous wrong is perpetuated is appalling. The amount of guilt contracted in the unrighteous treatment given to one individual, in robbing him of his most valued rights,—outraging his best feelings as a man, as a husband, as a father, and, it may be,

also, as a Christian, not by some transient act, under the influence of passion, but with deliberation and unrelenting perseverance, throughout his whole life. The amount of guilt thus contracted in the treatment given to one individual is incalculable. What, then, must be the magnitude of the guilt contracted, and the extent of damage inflicted, for which eternal justice demands reparation, by the perpetration of such cruel wrongs on more than three millions of human beings throughout successive generations! Could these moral wrongs, in their immense accumulation, take each a material form, proportioned in bulk to the greater or less enormity of the offence committed, what a huge mountain would they form—a mountain, the basis of which would fill the Slave States in all their boasted breadth, if not, also, the Free, and the top of which would indeed reach to heaven!

The questions then are,—at whose door does this tremendous accumulation of guilt lie? And is there a tribunal to which the criminal who has perpetrated such an amount of wrong can be brought? and a Judge, whose sentence shall not only be characterized by equity, but who has ample power to carry his judgment into execution, in an award of damages to the injured, and of condign retribution to the evil doer, however gigantic his strength, or strenuous his attempts to escape from the hands of justice?

Were there a great central tribunal of equity in our world, whose province it was to hear and give final judgment in all cases of great public wrong—a tribunal to which nations and communities were amenable, and to which those who had been wronged by this powerful class of criminals had free access; were they sure to obtain an impartial hearing and a righteous sentence; and were the judge or judges who occupied this tribunal clothed with such authority, and backed by such power, that the greatest of the nations behoved to submit to their award. Would not such a tribunal be deemed an inestimable blessing, and exert a mighty moral influence on the conduct of all the peoples and nations on the face of the earth? Let us, for a moment, suppose that such a high tribunal does exist on the earth, and that, among the causes that come before it, the three millions of American slaves bring an action before it, in which there is a clear statement made of the wrongs done to them, in all their numbers and atrocity, and reparation and punishment demanded by them; and that the slave-holders are summoned to make their best defence. What would they have to say for themselves? What hope could they have of anything but judgment against them? Could they expect any other sentence than *that*, the prospect of the execution of which would fill them with dismay, and cause the stoutest of them to tremble?

But there is such a high tribunal, to which nations as well as individuals are amenable, and to which all the oppressed and injured have free access for the redress of their wrongs. The God of heaven sits as Supreme Judge of the whole earth—all nations stand at his bar to be tried—the cause of the weakest and most defenceless against the most powerful is taken up by him—the sentence which he passes is ever most righteous, and he has all might to enforce his sentence against the most potent offenders. And though it is the duty of those who suffer wrong,

as well as their interest, to appeal to this Great Judge to vindicate their rights, he does not demand, as an absolute condition of his interposition in their behalf, that their cause, and the catalogue of their wrongs, shall be formally presented to him. His eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. He is witness to all the wrongs committed over the whole earth. He deeply resents these wrongs. He has them all written down before him as in a book; yea, so written, as they could be in no book—so written that it is impossible that he can forget any of them; and though the sentence which he passes is not always speedily executed,—though he gives nations as well as individuals time and space to repent,—his sentence is ever executed at last on all who continue impenitent.

Nothing, then, is more certain, than that the Supreme Judge has been, and now is, inspecting in the strictest manner all the wrongs inflicted on the slave population in the American States—that he has recorded, and is recording, all the deeds of wickedness committed—has his eye on every criminal, and will render a due recompense to each in His time, unless pardon is obtained by repentance and reformation, flowing from a believing improvement of Divine atoning blood. But who are the criminals in this case, on whom the eye of this mighty Judge rests—around whom His invincible chain is drawn—who, however unconsciously, now stand at His bar,—against whom righteous sentence is already passed,—and who are in jeopardy every hour of being subjected to the stroke of His terrible justice?

Are the actual slaveholders, who are daily oppressing their fellow-men in various ways, the *only* criminals? No; they are no doubt deeply criminal—a heavy amount of guilt lies on their heads—and a terrible punishment awaits them, unless they repent, either in this world or in the world that is to come, and it may be in both. But they are not the only criminals. The States, in which such a system of the darkest deeds are not only tolerated, but abetted and sanctioned by statute, and shielded and enforced by power, are, in their collective capacity, criminals before the Almighty Judge, whose power to punish them is such, that all nations are before Him as the drop of a bucket and the small dust in the balance. But are the Slave States *exclusively* the criminals in this case? No; their criminality is great, inasmuch as they are completely identified with the horrid system as communities, and of them, in all probability, a large share of the reparation, and the heaviest part of the punishment, shall be exacted, when the day of retribution shall arrive. But that mighty flourishing republic is *as a nation* involved in the manifold criminalities connected with this system of wickedness. Slavery forms a part of the constitution of the United States. The slaveholders and the slave-dealers, in their abominable traffic, have the same national support and protection extended to them in all the grievous wrongs which they commit, as any subject engaged in the most honourable and lawful trade or employment. There is no asylum to which an oppressed and deeply wronged slave can betake himself for safety from the grasp of his tyrant master, who, in daring contravention of the law of the God of heaven, claims him as his property,—within the whole territory of this mighty—so called—*free* re-

public. There is no refuge for him in any corner of the Free any more than of the Slave States. The worst class of robbers thus carry on their iniquitous traffic in open day, and without shame or fear; and when poor oppressed men or women, held in the chains of an unrighteous bondage, and panting for freedom, find their way into the centre of the Free Puritan New England States; no one there, with whatever bowels of pity he yearns over his deeply wronged brothers or sisters in misery, dares, if he would not be held a culprit in the eye of the law, extend the shield of his protection to the sufferers. The authorities moreover are bound to aid the oppressor in wreathing his iron chain around the neck of the man or woman who has perhaps a thousand times better right to freedom than himself. The man who is the basest criminal in the eye of the law of the God of heaven, is protected and held in honour by the law of the United States—yea, has every encouragement to persevere in the commission of his crimes; while the man who has done no wrong, is treated as the worst of felons, is refused all redress for the most grievous wrongs, and is bound in chains by the law; without any hope of release, till death put an end to his sufferings. Were this an incidental case, it might be thought sufficient to arouse the indignation of the civilized world, and make any people hide their head with shame. But it is not an isolated or incidental case—it is an extended system of the perversion of justice, embedded in the laws, and pervading the administration of the United States, by which more than thirty hundred thousand unoffending human beings are made, from year to year, the subjects of the greatest wrongs to which man can be subjected; and the perpetrators of this wrong—only a shade less criminal than the murderer—are not only shielded, but supported and encouraged by all the authority and power of the United States, in the commission of these crimes. The dark character of the wrong inflicted is well expressed in the following lines:—

"Each Slave endures, while yet he draws his breath.
A stroke as fatal as the *silke* of death."

The guilt, therefore, lies at the door of the nation as such—it stands charged with this before the tribunal of the God of nations to whom vengeance belongeth; and, unless there is repentance granted, how terrible must the coming retribution be! and how certain! May not the punishment of this system be already begun? In the divine administration, sin is extensively made its own punishment. And there can be no doubt that, in the demoralising effects of slavery on those who practice this evil,—in its hardening effect on the heart,—its searing effect on the conscience,—and, we may almost say, its brutalizing effect, there is a terrible punishment inflicted, which, extending to a whole community, though in very different degrees, may be ripening that people for a dark future of calamity and crime. May not the scenes of which we hear in Congress, be traced to slavery as their spring? And are not the conflicts and bloodshed in the western territories of the States, the harbingers of coming woes on a more extended scale? Undoubtedly they ought to be improved as warnings which the God of providence is pleased to give to a guilty people, ere He proceed to extremities.

Is there not, in the past dispensations of God, as moral Governor, what gives us ground to expect that dispensations of judgment are awaiting the United States, and that the millions of slaves that are now "robbed and peeled" shall be enriched at the expense of their oppressors and their freedom wrought out in connection with the infliction of signal punishment on those who have deprived them of their birthright, and obstinately refused to set them at liberty? The Egyptians oppressed the children of Israel for some hundreds of years, they enriched themselves by exacting of them the hardest labours. In this unrighteous cruel oppression, they were suffered to persevere for a long time,—and when they were at last urged to let them go free, by what was manifestly the call of God, they daringly refused to relax the chain in which they held Israel. What was the issue? It was the enriching of long robbed and oppressed Israel with the spoils of the Egyptians, and the infliction of judgment on that guilty people, by which their land was laid desolate, and multitudes cut off. Babylon is another instance of this. By that empire and its rulers, the children of Israel were enslaved and greatly oppressed. But at last a deliverer was raised up, by whom liberty was proclaimed to the captives, and who also gave commandment that their wants should be supplied from revenues that had long gone to enrich the treasury of the kings of Babylon. For it is to be marked, that this was the result of the overthrow of the Babylonish empire, and the setting up of another on its ruins. It was no doubt for his chosen people, that God wrought in both these cases. But it is also true, and is now clearly revealed, that "God is no respecter of persons"—that "He hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth"—and that He is the avenger of all wrong, by whomsoever committed, or to whomsoever done. It is not for us, however, to say in what form divine justice shall proceed in this matter. But we think it is absolutely certain that retribution will come in some way, unless it is averted by repentance and reformation in the voluntary manumission of those who are held in unrighteous bondage, and a *national* endeavour to make reparation, so far as this is possible, to those on whom such protracted and cruel wrongs have been perpetrated.

It may be asked, how has Britain, who had been so long implicated in the commission of similar crimes, escaped such retribution. Perhaps the guilt of Great Britain is not so aggravated as that of the United States. The attitude of Britain itself, with relation to this system, is a contrast to the position in which the *Free States* of America are placed, with relation to slavery, by the law as to fugitive slaves. The moment the slave set his foot on British soil he was free, *even when slavery was enforced in the Colonies*. This the poet beautifully states, when he says:—

"Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are free:
They touch our country and their shackles fall.
That's noble, and bespeaks a nature proud,
And jealous of the blessing: spread it then."

Nor was the system of slavery so completely interwoven with the law

and administration of Britain as it is with those of the United States. Further, the atrocities of the system were not so much under the actual inspection of the whole Christian community in Britain, as they are now under that of Christians throughout the American States. Besides, the population of the United States boast of being far beyond Britain in their knowledge of true liberty; and there has been a great flood of light thrown on the subject since Britain manumitted the slaves in her colonies, while the example which Britain has set in this matter, renders the great American Republic more inexcusable in the continued support and countenance which it has given and still gives to this system with all its abominations. Nor is it to be overlooked that Britain has made great efforts for the universal extinction of the slave trade.

But has Britain escaped without any retribution? She has not; and perhaps there is yet still more retribution awaiting her. She has had to pay a fine of twenty-one millions by way of compensation or damages. It is true that this did not go into the pockets of the slaves; but it was for their sakes that the sacrifice was willingly made by the Christians of Britain. If this sum went into the hands of the slaveholders, it is plain that they have not been enriched by it. A curse has been laid on the property accumulated in the slave colonies, and also on the proprietors; and these colonies are rather a burden than a source of gain to Britain.*

But as in the case of ordinary criminals, the public prosecutor and the judge concur in inflicting a less severe punishment on those who frankly plead guilty, and show signs of repentance; so it is also manifest that, in the administrations of the great Judge and Avenger, there is a less severe punishment inflicted on nations and societies that listen to reproof and warning, and cease from the practice of wickedness under *moral* influences, than on those who obstinately persevere in their evil ways, till they are deprived of doing more mischief by *physical* restraint, or the infliction of external calamity. It was under moral influences, and not by a physical necessity, that Britain set its oppressed free. It was a spontaneous act, in the performance of which there were joy and satisfaction on the part of the nation—of the large majority of the nation—by whose influence the chains of the oppressed were burst asunder. And it would be the glory, and, no doubt, also, the safety of the United States, to walk in this part of the steps of the Mother Country. The only way of escape from ultimate retribution of awful severity, seems to be the spontaneous manumission of the whole slave population, and an earnest effort on the part of the United States to make compensation to the utmost of their power for the wrongs done, grudging no sacrifice by which this can be accomplished. In the experience of Egypt, who refused to let Israel go, till, by stroke after stroke, the land was wasted, and the pride of that great nation laid in the dust, the United States may read a lesson of warning. The materials are plainly piling up; and, if they are left to accumulate till they are kindled by the

* What is stated above, as to the probability that retribution may yet remain to be rendered, was written ere the accounts had reached of the ominous and disastrous riots in Guiana.

wrath of the Almighty, who can tell the breadth of the desolation which the conflagration shall produce? It must be manifest, therefore, that those Christians in the United States are the truest patriots, as well as the best philanthropists, who are protesting most earnestly against slavery, and urging the speedy extinction of the whole system. They are thus doing what they can to avert national judgment, as well as vindicate the rights of the oppressed. Whereas, the abettors and advocates of slavery are under the influence of a sordid love of unrighteous gain, or that of expediency, displaying indifference to the honour and best interests of their country, utter disregard to the rights of their fellowmen, and urging one of the most favoured nations on the face of the earth to proceed in the perpetration of fearful national crime, till judgment become inevitable.*

There are some Churches in the United States which have all along had the honour of testifying against slavery. This honour belongs to the Associate Synod of North America, which sprung from, and has been intimately connected with, the Secession Church, and also, we believe, to the Reformed Presbyterians. In a late number of the *Westminster Herald*—a weekly religious paper conducted by ministers belonging to the Associate Presbyterian Church, who are also Professors in a college there—there is an able article on the question of slavery, in the form of a review of a speech by a Dr McGill, delegate from the Old School Assembly, glorying in the liberality of the views of that Church on this great question, and who seems to have acceded to that Church from a body of more strict principles.

The able exposure of the sentiments contained in Dr McGill's speech concludes with the following very impressive statement regarding the natural tendency of backward steps in public profession, and the little reason which Churches have to glory in the accessions which they receive of ministers who once occupied higher ground in respect of principle than they do themselves:—

"As long as men hold, with fidelity, all the truth they have attained, there is good hope of them. But when, for any consideration, they forsake a profession more pure for one that is less so, the probability is, that, like the rolling stone on the mountain side, they will not be able to hold their position.—It is a matter of great rejoicing, and who has not seen it? when a man, a minister, promising and popular, takes a backward step in respect to his profession; those to whom he betakes himself, not thinking that it will be just as easy for him, bye and bye, to lay aside other principles, as those which he has already laid aside; and that he of whom they feel themselves proud, may reasonably be expected to infect, with a spirit of degeneracy, the mass with which he has united. We have not been unobservant of the application of this general principle, and while it is true that the O. S. Presbyterian Church has gained of other Reformed Presbyterian Churches in the M'Masters, the Junkins, the M'Gills, &c., it is a matter of fact, that these men have not laboured to bring up the church with which they have united, to higher attainments, but are standard bearers in the downward path of moral degeneracy. In this we arraign no man's motives, we state what we understand to be simply matter of fact."

* This paper was written before the outrage in the Senate House of the United States, in the dastardly assault of Brooks on Mr Sumner; and ere the criminal jurisprudence of the United States was degraded by the trifling punishment of a paltry fine awarded to so great a criminal by the judge before whom the case was tried.

It is mournful to think that Christian Churches should be guilty in any way of throwing the shield of their protection around a system of such fearful immorality as slavery, as it exists in the United States, is demonstrated to be. But it is cheering to find, that some have had the courage to set their face against it at an early period, and that they have now the prospect of seeing the principles which they have so long advocated in the ascendant. Let the Anti-Slavery Churches in the United States proceed in their honourable course. Though the smaller sections of the Christian Church among that great people, they may be the means of saving their country, and they are vindicating the Bible and Christianity from the reproaches to which the conduct of other Churches are exposing both. It is certainly an outrageous insult on the character of the Bible to insinuate that it could either warrant or countenance such a system of immorality as slavery, as practised in the United States, is. The Bible can never be inconsistent with itself, and it would be so, did it countenance the grossest transgressions of the second great precept of the eternal law—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The sophistries which have been advanced on the subject are well exposed in the work from which we have quoted. It will be no small satisfaction to the advocates of right on this subject, whatever may be the issue, that "they have done what they could," and it will be a high privilege if they have a mark set on them for safety, so that they shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.

THE CLAIMS OF THE STUDENTS' FUND URGED.

It will be seen from what is stated on the cover, that Mr A. Morrison, the gentleman in Canada who formerly sent a sum of money for the purpose of aiding Students for the holy ministry under the superintendence of Professor Murray, and who was thus, in the hand of God, the means of originating the Fund, regarding which it is intended to offer some remarks in this paper, has sent an additional donation of *Forty Guineas* for the same object. This is surely the doing of the Lord; and it may well be wondrous in our eyes. This is a very remarkable interposition of the great Disposer; and there are various things which render it peculiarly seasonable at this crisis, of which the donor knew nothing, but which were all well known to Him in whose hand the hearts of all men are. Intelligent and observant though we readily admit the people connected with the Original Secession to be, they do not seem to be duly impressed with the difficulties with which young men have to grapple, and which it is necessary for them to surmount, in order that they may come forth as preachers of the Gospel. Neither the ministers, though they have themselves passed through the ordeal, nor the people, have duly considered either the importance or the urgent necessity of having some means adopted by which the arduous path through which young men have to pass, might be somewhat smoothed. But that God to whom all things are naked and open, and whose glory is so much concerned in the maintenance of an

efficient and faithful ministry, saw the importance and the urgency of this matter, and has been pleased to call our attention to it in a way which is at once striking and pleasant.

We have no cause to boast of our wealth as a witnessing body; but unless our impressions are erroneous, there are a number of individuals connected with several congregations, to whom it would be a less effort to contribute five hundred or even a thousand pounds to this, or any similar object, than it has been for the donor in Canada to give *his* fifty pounds. We trust, therefore, that the example thus set by a stranger in a distant country, will exert a salutary influence on others who have it in their power to give efficient assistance; and that one end for which the heart of this individual has been moved and his hand opened, is, that others, by this means, shall be stirred up to honour the Lord with their substance, in this or other fields where such efforts are urgently demanded.

In urging this subject on the attention of our readers, it is the reverse of our design to encourage a worldly or mercenary spirit in the minds of those who look forward to the honour of being employed as the public servants of the Lord Jesus Christ in his Church. There is scarcely any thing which is more to be deprecated than a ministry embued with such a spirit. Self-denial, as to earthly things, is one of the great laws of the Church's Lawgiver—to which it is required that all His people should cheerfully submit—and by a hearty submission to which, it is especially required that the public servants of Christ should evince their loyalty to Him as their King. There is scarcely any duty, the performance of which in a right spirit is more enviable, than that of making temporal sacrifices from respect to the will and glory of Christ. And there is nothing of which we are more fully satisfied, than that none will ever see cause to regret any sacrifices which they have been enabled to make in singleness of heart for the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ. One of our means of safety, as a witnessing Church at the present time, is, that there is no temptation held out to a young man of talent to enter on a course of preparation for the office of the holy ministry, in our connection, from worldly considerations. But while such temptations are to be deprecated, and not desired in a Church, and are snares in those Churches in which they exist, Scripture and reason demand that the public servants of the Lord Jesus Christ should receive an honourable maintenance—that those to whom they minister in spiritual things should care for their carnal things, and that their position in a temporal respect should not be rendered repulsive, by being that of a degraded class in their outward circumstances in society. Nor does it seem to be necessary, as a means of securing a spiritual ministry, that the course of preparation for this should be beset with difficulties, that, in many cases, are all but insurmountable, so that the youthful mind should have strong temptations to shrink from encountering them, along with the prospect of a condition of comparative poverty as his future lot after these difficulties are surmounted. There are several things in relation to this subject worthy of the consideration of the Church collectively, to which we venture to call attention.

There is first the consideration, that *good natural abilities and a well balanced mind* are highly requisite to the efficient discharge of the important duties of the ministerial office. It is readily admitted, that gracious endowments are the first order of qualifications for such work, without which, the spirit essential to the right performance of it is wanting, in whatever measure other qualifications may be possessed. But the duties of the ministerial office are so arduous and varied in their nature, that none more need, than the public servants of Christ, a large measure of those natural gifts by which persons are fitted for the successful prosecution of any line of worldly business to which their energies are devoted. In some corrupt Churches, places are found which are denominated "sinecures," so that parents who have the means of securing these, devote such of their sons to the Church as are fit for nothing else. But when the administration of a Church is in a healthful condition, there is no sphere of labour in which energy of every kind is more requisite. It is, therefore, such youths as would be most likely to be successful in any department of worldly business that we should be earnest to see devoting themselves to the public service of the Church.

There is, secondly, the consideration that there is *a longer and more expensive course of preparation* demanded for this than almost any other employment. No one can calculate on much less than a *ten years' apprenticeship*, if we may use the term, before he can enter on the discharge of the first department of public duty in the Church, that of preaching the Gospel. This apprenticeship is not only long, it is also, in all its years, expensive. It is outlay, not only of time and energy, but also of money, in all its years, from the beginning to the termination, without *any return*. The case of the student thus differs from that of an apprentice in most other professions, in which there is in general not only far less outlay, but also more or less income from the very commencement of his process of training, or soon after. The student must draw the means of his outward support, during his ten years of arduous preparation, either from his own private resources, or those of his relations, or from some employment apart from his work of preparation, such as teaching, while he draws nothing in immediate return from his labours in acquiring meetness for this work.

The difficulties connected with a course of training for the ministry are in this respect so great, as in many cases to be insurmountable, especially by those who are not located in one of those cities in which there is a College or University.

There is, thirdly, the consideration, that it is eminently to be desired *that the whole course of training for the ministry, at each of its stages, should be as efficient as possible*. The good of the Church, and that of the individual himself, demand this. By a superficial process at any one of the stages, unspeakable loss is sustained, and great injury done. It is of the utmost importance that the foundations should be well laid in a thorough English and classical education, before entering the College: this is necessary to a successful and profitable prosecution of the different branches of learning there. The study of Theology ought also to be early begun, that the student of Divinity have not at this stage

to be taught first principles, but, having the foundations already well laid, be occupied then in building on these foundations, and in acquiring clearer and more enlarged views of divine truth.

In no Church is it more necessary that there should be a thoroughly educated ministry than in the Original Secession. Nor must the standard in any one of the departments be lowered, if we would do justice to the great cause in support of which we are associated. In all the departments of learning, apart from Theology, our youth have access to the best sources of learning which the country can furnish, and can avail themselves of these without any compromise of principle; and if we cannot afford a numerous staff of professors, as larger bodies can, the energetic and intense labours of our excellent Professor should be seconded by the different presbyteries in which students are situated, in a careful superintendence of their studies, and in prescribing exercises to them, as a special and very important part of public duty.

At the crisis of our disruption, it was found that there was such a call for supply of sermon, that we felt warranted, in several cases, to abridge the period of attendance at the Divinity Hall; and, in the kind providence of God, a number of young men stood by us, or came to our aid, whose attainments, in all parts of preparation, were such as enabled them to make this sacrifice without material loss, and as left no room for hesitation on the part of the Courts to send them forth. But it was never intended that this should become the rule, or that the full *curriculum* should be in the least abridged.

There is, fourthly, the consideration, that, in the case of students connected with us, there is a *very limited range of employment as a means of support during the prosecution of their course of preparation.*

It is not necessary to adduce any illustration of this, as it must be seen at once to be a very formidable difficulty, and such as exposes Original Secession students to peculiar temptations.

From these and other considerations, then, it must be manifest, that there is a special call for more than ordinary efforts to furnish means by which aid shall be given to young men, not so much as a favour, but as a matter of right, and not for the entire removal of their difficulties, but such as will render these a little less formidable, or more easily overcome.

The young man who, in devoting himself to a course of preparation for public work in the Church, is thereby cut off from the means of obtaining, it may be, a liberal outward support in some other employment, and, at the same time, has to be at a heavy expense of outlay, seems to have as really a claim to support from the Church, as those who have actually entered on official duty in the administration of divine ordinances. It is not desired that the path should be rendered peculiarly smooth. It is meet that those who devote themselves to public service in the Church, especially while the witnesses for Jesus are still called to prophesy in sackcloth, should evince courage and resolution to grapple with difficulties in the commencement of their course, and show that they have counted the cost. Still it is the duty of the members of the Church to see that an undue share of the cross to be taken up and borne in following Christ, be not laid on the shoulders

of young men who willingly devote themselves to the public work of the Church.

We do trust, therefore, that the example which our friend in Canada has been led to set in this matter will not be lost on us; and that others will be stirred up so to walk in his steps, from a sense of great public duty, that our Synod will have it in its power to adopt such measures as will lighten the burdens and increase the comfort and confidence of young men who devote themselves to public work in the Church in her present suffering condition. It would not be difficult to show, that every youth who does so, possessed of the requisite qualifications, makes a tenfold greater sacrifice of a worldly kind than most of the largest subscribers to this Fund are likely soon to do. It is well, at the same time, that young men should consider that the office of ambassadors for Christ is the most honourable in which men can be employed—that being engaged in discharging the duties of this office in a right spirit, is more to be coveted than being seated on the throne of any earthly kingdom—and that those who are called to make the greatest sacrifices in the service and cause of Christ are most signally honoured.

REFORMED PRESBYTERIANS AND COVENANT RENOVATION.

Reply to an Article in the Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, for April 1836.

WITH the Reformed Presbyterians we have no desire for controversy. Disputes between them and Original Seceders we regard as peculiarly unseemly. Two bodies of professed witnesses for Christ, so nearly related in principle, and who have struggled so long and faithfully for truth, ought not to be criminating and quarrelling with one another, but studying the things that make for peace, and endeavouring to get differences removed. It is to be regretted that they met so often on the field of strife in former days, and, especially, that their combating was conducted with such virulency and bitterness of spirit. But if Reformed Presbyterians *will* attack us, we must defend ourselves; and particularly, we must not allow them to misrepresent us, and caricature our principles. They have been doing so of late in a very offensive manner, and without even the shadow of provocation. In proof of this, we appeal to Mr Martin's Catechism on the *Principles and Position* of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, *generally*, if not *formally*, approved of by the body. We are in that publication charged with maintaining that "nations have a right to erect immoral and unscriptural institutions," and with holding sentiments inconsistent with the Headship of Christ, and our solemn National Vows; and all this does the author allege against us, without adducing any evidence whatever, but references to the Reformed Presbyterian Testimony, and a *note* in our Testimony grossly misinterpreted. Such doctrine we have often disclaimed; but our Reformed Presbyterian friends will not accept of

our disclaimers, but doggedly persist in their charges. Another instance of the same description, is a *Report* adopted by the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, at their meeting in Glasgow last year, on the subject of *Covenant Renovation*. We hold, as Original Seceders have always done, that the National Covenants may be renewed by a *minority* of the nation in an ecclesiastical capacity; and in the document alluded to, it is averred that, in doing so, we plead for what is "an impossibility," a manifest "contradiction in terms," and what "cannot really have any existence;" and even with the absurdity of renewing the Covenants in order to perpetuate their obligation. To be silent under such allegations as these, would betray not only pusillanimity, but unfaithfulness to our profession; and, accordingly, though we made no reference to Mr Martin's Catechism, leaving it for after consideration, we reviewed, in the February number of our Magazine, this Synodical Report. Our review has called forth the *article* referred to at the top of this paper; and to the leading statements of it, we propose, in our subsequent observations, to reply. The article is, strictly speaking, scarcely *worthy* of an answer. The writer *does* evince intense wrath against the review, and appears at a loss for terms to express sufficiently his indignation; but he never fairly meets a single statement which it contains. His production, therefore, might have been allowed to pass unnoticed. But to prevent it being supposed that we admit the brazen-faced averments which it makes, or are unable to meet and refute them, and lest any reading it carelessly should imagine that we had done the Reformed Presbyterians injustice; we consider it not improper very briefly to expose it.

The author, with great *affected candour*, lets us know that he imputes not "to the body of the Original Secession Church the merits or demerits of the review, nor to the ministers generally of that communion;" expresses great unwillingness to believe that the statements of it "could meet with the approbation and sympathy of the respected body of which the *Original Secession Magazine* is understood to be the organ;" and gives it as his opinion, "that there must be something not altogether right about the management of that periodical, when such an article could be suffered to appear in its pages." All this we regard as mere affectation; not as in reality what the words indicate, but the author's *method* of exciting prejudice against the review. It is a species of reasoning had recourse to by weak writers, with the view of bespeaking the sympathy of their readers, when they feel that they have little argument to bring forward. That there may be no doubt in the author's mind, however, and to prevent him *really* giving persons credit for what they do not deserve, we can assure him that not only the ministers and people of the Original Secession, but even some *Reformed Presbyterian* ministers and people, *approve* of, and *sympathize* with, the statements of the review; and as to the remark about something being wrong in the management of the periodical, that could admit such an article into its pages; *this*, most certainly, applies with tenfold force to the Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, in admitting the article that replies to the review. If we are not very greatly mistaken, indeed the bulk of the intelligent in

the "respected body" of which the latter periodical is understood to be the organ, would rather that the author's answer to our paper had never been permitted to see the light.

A special charge which our antagonist prefers against us is, that we have called the document we reviewed a *Report* on the "renewal of the National Covenants," when it was a portion only of a Report on the "Signs of the Times." Certainly nothing but an irresistible itch for fault-finding could have led him to magnify this into an offence. What we called a Report on Covenant Renovation, was comprehended in a Report on the Signs of the Times; but still it was the Report of the Committee on the particular *subject* of Covenant Renovation. It was a *particular* Report, taken from a *general* Report, and was entire and distinct in itself. It begins, accordingly, in the following manner:—"Your Committee took into consideration the question referred to them, regarding the renewal by this Church of our National Covenants." It is ridiculous, therefore, to make this a ground of charge; and if the author did not do so from the mere desire of finding fault, he must have been influenced by the difficulty of finding arguments against the obnoxious review. The latter, after all, was possibly the true reason. Drowning persons will catch at straws when they can get hold of nothing else. We omitted mentioning that the Report was taken from a general Report on the Signs of the Times, to avoid burdening the title of our paper with phraseology; and, as our candid castigator is obliged to confess, it served us no purpose to conceal the general title. Our omission neither aided nor injured our cause, nor did it do any injustice to either the Synod or the Committee.

Our opponent makes a very loud complaint in regard to what he denominates the *reviewer's spirit*; and "in illustration," as he expresses it, of this, he quotes and comments on the following sentences of the review:—"How then will our Reformed Presbyterian brethren *now* regard these instances of vowing and swearing to the Lord of Hosts, and the Church's glorious and divinely-anointed King? Will they sneer at them as attempting 'an impossibility,' and denounce them as 'a contradiction in terms?' They may thus scout and reprobate them, in the exuberance of their new light; but they were not so regarded by the priests, and prophets, and reforming kings, and the thousands of Judah, who vowed and swore with all their hearts, and gloried in thus giving themselves to the Lord." This passage the author describes as manifesting a spirit fitted to sicken both himself and his readers; as making the Reformed Presbyterians worse than ordinary infidels; and even as acting towards them as Joab did to Amasa, when he took him by the beard to kiss him, and then smote him in the fifth rib. We think we have more ground to complain of his treatment of the quoted sentences, than he has to complain of their spirit. They can only be understood, and the spirit of them seen, when viewed in connection with the context. But he makes his remarks on them, and draws his inferences from them, without the smallest reference to any context whatever, either preceding or subsequent. For his comment, there is not the shadow of a foundation; and it is difficult to believe that he does not *know* this. The

Reformed Presbyterian Synod, in their judicially adopted Report, represent the Original Secession doctrine, that the Covenants may be renewed by a minority, as "an impossibility," and "a contradiction in terms"; and after showing, by a variety of instances, that this is inconsistent with the renovations of the Sinai Covenant that took place with God's sanction among the Jews, who were only a minority of the Israelitish nation, with whom the Covenant was originally made; we ask our Reformed brethren if, in the face of these Scripture examples, they will still sneer at, and denounce renewing the Covenants by a minority as an impossibility, and a contradiction in terms, and tell them that, if they will do so, they will act in opposition to God himself, and the approved practice of his Church. Our words were entirely hypothetical, and we still adhere to them. If the Reformed Presbyterians will repudiate their *Report*, and admit that the Covenants may be renewed by a minority, *then* there will be no ground for charging them with sneering at the covenanting of God's ancient people. But if they will abide by their Report, and denounce the Secession practice, and their own practice at Crawford-John and Auchensach, as an impossibility, and a contradiction in terms, *then* we still maintain that they are constructively chargeable with sneering at and denouncing these glorious instances of Covenant Renovation in the Jewish Church. We place them, therefore, between the horns of a dilemma, and they may choose whichever horn they prefer. It is not we, but their own newly adopted opinion, that represents them as reprobating and sneering at the covenanting which the Old Testament Church practised and God approved; and if this *sickens* them, and makes them *infidels*, they have only themselves to blame.

A very extraordinary part of the author's paper, and which shows how recklessly, when the mind is biased, persons may write, is that which refers to a *Proposition*, agreed upon by a joint committee of the Reformed Presbyterian and Original Secession Synods, respecting a union of the two bodies. The Proposition is in reference to the National Covenants, and was specially intended to satisfy the Seceders that the Reformed Presbyterians were friendly to renewing the Covenants by a minority of the nation acting in an ecclesiastical capacity; and it contains the following statement:—"Though these Covenants have been grievously violated, it is the duty of a minority faithfully to adhere to them, and to express their adherence in a public and formal manner, at the same time asserting and maintaining their continued obligation on the community at large; and when the circumstances in which they are placed, and the aspects of providence may require it, to declare their adherence in a suitable bond." It will be observed, that it is in these words asserted, not merely that it is the duty of a minority to adhere to the Covenants, but, when the aspects of providence may require it, "*to declare their adherence in a suitable bond.*" This satisfied the Committee on the part of the Secession, that the two Churches were of one mind as to Covenant Renovation. We, therefore, in our review of the Synod Report, appealed to this Proposition as a testimony by eminent and leading ministers of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in favour of the general doctrine, that the Cove-

nants may be renewed by a minority of the nation ; and hence, as an evidence that, by adopting the Report, they have entirely changed their views. Nor can anything be clearer than that the Report is at variance with the Proposition. The Proposition declares that a minority of the nation may, in certain circumstances, renew the Covenants ; and the Report declares that they cannot be renewed except by the nation itself, and that the renewal of them by the Church or her members, is an impossibility, and a contradiction in terms, and what cannot really have any existence. And can there possibly be a more direct contrast ? The Proposition and the Report are antipodal—are opposed to each other as the poles. But this our opponent denies. He declares that the Proposition “does not contain *one word* inconsistent with the views set forth in the Report lately adopted by the Reformed Synod ;” and adds, “on the contrary, its clear and correct statements are admirably fitted to vindicate the Synod against the charges of the reviewer.” Our readers, we doubt not, after what we have stated, will easily see the groundlessness and absurdity of these assertions ; and in what a light do they exhibit to us the members of the Reformed Presbyterian Committee ! If Dr Symington, and Dr Bates, and Dr Gould, and the other gentlemen of whom the Committee consisted, understood the Proposition as interpreted by our author, they did not act in good faith with the Original Seceders. In other words, if by the statement that it is the duty of a minority of the nation “to declare their adherence to the Covenants in a suitable bond,” they meant that the Covenants could be renewed only by the *nation itself*, and that renewing them by the Church or her members was an *impossibility*, a *contradiction in terms*, and a *thing which could not really have any existence*, the Seceders must have been completely *outwitted* in agreeing to the proposition. We say *outwitted*, because the Reformed Presbyterians knew well the sense in which the Seceders understood it. We do not for a moment entertain the idea that these eminent ministers of Christ and respectable elders of the Church were capable of acting with duplicity ; but they either did so, or have now changed their views ; and we leave the settlement of this with the author of the paper. We have no doubt whatever, that, should he think proper to consult them, they will tell him that he has entirely mistaken the Proposition.

Not less extraordinary is what our friend says with reference to a conclusion which we drew from the following statement in the Synod's Report :—“It appears also to your Committee, that some who have been very urgent about what they deemed the necessity of Covenant Renovation by members of the Church, in order to their being entitled to be called Covenanters, were, by such a plea, manifesting forgetfulness of the truth, and reality of National Covenant obligations, as a thing in itself abiding and permanent, and resting on the nation, altogether independently of any renovation or even acknowledgment. Here, it appears to your Committee, there is no small danger. To maintain that Covenant Renovation in any form is necessary to render our National Covenants obligatory, is in fact a substantial denial of the truth and reality of their own intrinsic and permanent obligation.”

The persons to whom the Report in these words alludes as being very urgent about Covenant Renovation by members of the Church, are obviously the Original Seceders. Even our opponent himself does not deny this. It would be of no use, indeed, to deny it; for, as distinct from the Reformed Presbyterians, the Seceders are the only parties to whom it will apply. Now, whatever ambiguity may be in the passage,—and it is certainly not very luminous,—there cannot be anything clearer than that it represents *our* covenanting, which is Covenant Renovation by a minority of the nation, acting in an ecclesiastical capacity, as not only intended to perpetuate the obligation of the Covenants, but as a substantial denial of the truth and reality of their own intrinsic and permanent obligation. From this, in the review, we inferred that the Synod's objection to our Covenant Renovation was equally an objection to Covenant Renovation in any circumstances, and even by the nation, nationally considered, though it were to acknowledge the Covenants; and can any conclusion be more natural? If the renewing of the Covenants by a minority of the nation amounts to a denial of their obligation, the renewing of them by the nation itself would obviously amount to the same thing. This interpretation of the Synod's statement, however, the author not only objects to, but denounces in the most unmeasured terms. He finds that it cannot be apologized for on the ground of confusion of thought, which he is so condescending as to give us credit for in some other parts of the review, but sees in it want of good faith, or, to speak more plainly, dishonesty. We have no wish to retaliate by returning "railing for railing," but if his reply to our reasoning be not want of good faith, it is certainly "confusion of thought" in no ordinary degree. How does he attempt to avoid our conclusion? He fixes on the following sentence of the passage quoted from the Report:—"To maintain that Covenant Renovation, in any form, is necessary to render the National Covenants obligatory, is, in fact, a substantial denial of the truth and reality of their own intrinsic and permanent obligation;" and not only tells his readers that the word *minority* is not to be found in the sentence, but goes on to describe it as clear and definite, and giving no foundation for the charge of the reviewer. Perhaps this was the only plausible method he could have adopted, with the view of resisting our argument; but it serves him no purpose whatever. There is *nothing* said in the sentence about a minority, and, as an abstract statement, it is "definite and clear." But the Synod's Report, which he is defending, connects the sentence with what immediately precedes, and makes it all turn upon, and apply to, the Covenant Renovation of the Original Seceders, which is that of a *minority* of the nation, and is condemned by the Report because it is so. Let him show that the Report does not connect the "clear and definite" statement with *our* covenanting, and then he may talk as he does, but *not till then*. The mode, indeed, in which our author meets this part of the review seems not only unfair, but jesuitical. He speaks as if the Report had been intended to guard persons against supposing that they are not bound by the Covenants, simply because they do not acknowledge them, and those who do formally acknowledge and renew them, against laying too much stress on mere acknowledgment, in for-

getfulness of their permanent and intrinsic obligation ; while it is clear as a sunbeam that the sole object of the Report, in the passage to which we took exception, was a condemnation of the Secession mode of their renewal. The Synod may have supposed that we renewed the Covenants in order to perpetuate their obligation, and been thus led to the conclusion, that our renewing of them amounted to a denial of their own intrinsic obligation ; but if so, they themselves, and not we, are to blame. We know what our own covenanting is, and, knowing this, we declare again, without hesitation, that, if it amounts to a substantial denial of the intrinsic and permanent obligation of the Covenants, no would the covenanting of the "nation itself," though it were to acknowledge the Covenants, and, like Seceders, become urgent about their renovation.

But how does our antagonist meet our general charge against the Synodical Report, namely, that it repudiates the renovation of our National Covenants by a minority of the nation as members of the Church ? He defends the *Report*, reiterating the statements in it on which we founded our charge, and pronouncing them self-evident truths. He declares, in other words, and in stronger language than the Report itself, that the Covenants cannot be renewed "except by the nation itself ;" and that the renovation of them by the Church or her members is "an impossibility," "a contradiction in terms," and "a thing which really cannot have any existence." He makes no reply, however, to our arguments against this. We pronounced it inconsistent with approved Scripture example, referring to the covenanting under Jehoiada, and Asa, and Hezekiah, and Josiah, and that under Nehemiah, after the return from captivity, which was all renovation of the Sinai Covenant by a minority of the Israelitish nation—with the example of our covenanting ancestors—with the doctrine and practice, and even the Testimony, of the Reformed Presbyterians themselves—and with the practice of other Reformed Presbyterian Churches. But of this he does not take the smallest notice, more than to say that his *space* will not permit him to enter minutely into our arguments, and that this does not seem at all necessary. This we regard as satisfactory proof that he finds himself unable to meet our reasoning. He obviously feels a successful reply impossible, and, therefore, is prudently silent. Had he seen a possibility of refuting us, he would, doubtless, with all promptitude, have undertaken the task. Is it to be supposed that such a partisan, as he shows himself to be, would have allowed us to repudiate the Synod's Report as inconsistent with Scripture example, and the practice of our reforming and covenanting ancestors, and, particularly, with the practice and Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, had he thought it practicable to repel our assertions ? The supposition cannot for a moment be entertained. Could he have reconciled the Report with the Testimony and the Auchensach and Crawford-John covenanting, he would have had no difficulty at all in finding both space and time.

He does, it is true, allege that we misrepresent the Report, representing our review of it as a man of straw, formed out of our own imagination, and asserting that it is consistent not only with itself,

but with Reformed Presbyterian principles. But does he bring forward any evidence to show that the Report can be thus defended and vindicated? He professes to give a proof, and with great apparent confidence; but his proof is a very extraordinary one, and by no means calculated to serve the end intended by it. It is contained in the following words, referring to a minority adhering to the Covenants:—"The adherence of a minority may, of course, be expressed and ratified, and the obligations involved in it renewed, in various ways, in such manner as may be most for the glory of God, and the advancement of his cause. The reviewer strangely imagines that the views expressed in the Report are inconsistent with this; and hence the fallacy of his whole train of argument from beginning to end." Now, what is the meaning of this? Can it be understood or explained? Is it possible to bring a tangible idea out of it? It appears to us incomprehensible. The author says we strangely imagine that the views in the Report are inconsistent with *this*. We imagine no such thing, for we cannot for the life of us tell what *this* is. He speaks of confusion of thought, but, if ever there was confusion of thought, *this* certainly is so. It is "confusion worse confounded." Very possibly the passage was not intended to be understood, but meant only as an expedient to cover a retreat from a contest that was found to be hopeless. But if it has a meaning at *all*, we can conceive nothing else which that can be, but that the Covenant Renovation by a minority of the nation which our author and his friends admit, is the renovation of some covenant of their own, entered into by them to express adherence to the Covenants. But, supposing our conjecture correct, would this defend the Reformed Presbyterian Synod against the charge of having changed their views? Is this the kind of Covenant Renovation that took place at Crawford-John and Auchensach, and is approved of and maintained in the Testimony? The Report may be consistent with some unprecedented and unexplained covenanting of this kind; but it is not consistent with what our Scottish Reformers, and the Reformed Presbyterians themselves, have generally called Covenant Renovation.

Had we been disposed to continue discussion, or as anxious to multiply charges against our opponent as he is to find fault with us, we might have greatly prolonged our remarks. He lays himself particularly open to animadversion for what in the review he entirely overlooks. Arguments that seem to bear heavy against him, he either does not notice at all, or merely alludes to, as "some other things" mentioned by the reviewer, "some vapouring of the reviewer," and so forth. Notwithstanding his strong language against renewing the Covenants by a minority, he never once refers to the distinction stated and dwelt on in the review between the *renewing* of the National Covenants and a *national renewing* of them, and is similarly silent on various other matters that stood with equal prominence in his way. But these things at present we let pass.

It may well now be asked, why all this noise? If the author had nothing more to bring against the review, why so much outcry and complaint, and such talk about "confusion of thought," "misunder-

standing," and "misrepresentation," and "want of good faith," and making "men of straw?" The noise and strong assertions were doubtless considered necessary for the credit of the author's Church. It could not be admitted that the body had changed, and, therefore, the review had to be met, if not by solid reasoning, at least by abuse. It would certainly have been more honourable and manly, and even more in accordance with the spirit of Christianity, to have frankly acknowledged the charge and defended it, declaring that the Testimony was wrong, and the Auchonsach and Crawford-John covenanting a mistake. But this, it would appear, the author was not yet prepared to do.

We referred, in our review of the Synod's *Report*, to the renewal of the National Covenants in the Reformed Presbyterian Churches of Ireland and America. We have just received the June and July numbers of *The Covenanter*, a Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, understood to be the organ of the larger branch of the body in America; and the statements which they contain in regard to Covenant Renovation are so corroborative of our views, and so cheering in these lukewarm and backsliding times, that we cannot help adding them to our reply, and placing them before our readers. The American Synod, at its meeting last year, agreed to renew our Covenants in a bond suited to circumstances, and, with this view, prepared a draft of a bond and confession of sins, to be laid before the Synod this year. The Synod met in May last, and the confession of sins and bond were unanimously adopted, and arrangements made for the whole Synod engaging in the solemn exercise before separating. But, owing to a more than ordinary amount of business this season, it was ultimately considered better to postpone the work, and devote to it the first two days of the next meeting. It is the custom in America for the different Presbyteries to bring up *reports* concerning the state of religion, and their circumstances generally, to the Synod. A number of the Presbyteries of this Synod refer in their reports to Covenant Renovation, and the manner in which they speak is both refreshing and encouraging.

The Presbytery of New York say, in their report,—“The Renovation of our Covenants we deem called for. It will impress upon our consciences superadded obligation to contend for the truth, be an example to other social bodies publicly to own and acknowledge Christ, and prepare the Church for the struggle on which she is entering.” We are not told what *struggle* the brethren of this Presbytery refer to; but they doubtless consider that important events are near, and more than ordinary solemn work before the Church, for which they regard Covenanting and Covenant Renovation a suitable and necessary preparation.

The Philadelphia Presbytery say, in their report,—“Our ministers have directed the attention of their people to the subject of covenanting, to prepare them for the solemn work of Covenant Renovation; and we look forward with prayerful interest to the Synod's engaging in the great work; and trust that, under the blessing of the Spirit, it may be a means of reviving personal piety amongst us, of promoting har-

mony throughout the Church, and increasing attachment to the principles of revered and martyred ancestry."

The Presbytery of Pittsburgh report,—“Above all, we are deeply concerned for the success of the measure adopted at the late meeting of Synod for the Renovation of our Covenant engagements. Should we all harmoniously unite in publicly re-engaging ourselves in the oath and vow of God, to follow undeviatingly the footsteps of the flock of Christ that has gone before us, such an occasion should be hailed as a most auspicious event, and mark a new era in the history of our spiritual progress. But should diversity of sentiment in relation to the import of the bond of renovation exist, or should there be any disposed to swerve from any part of the doctrine and order of the holy and beautiful house in which our fathers praised God, either by leaving out some of the attainments of the Second Reformation, or by adding to them any thing of doubtful or sinful character, the occasion would be disastrous in the extreme. We recommend, therefore, a full and free interchange of opinion by Synod before the solemn work be engaged in, that with one heart and with one mind we may make our vows, and henceforth strive more earnestly for the faith of the gospel.”

The following is the report of the order of procedure, while it was supposed that the Synod would have been able to have gone on with the solemn work this year, in which it will be seen that the Rev. Dr Houston of Ireland was to have taken part:—“N. R. Johnston to read and comment on the confession of sins; H. P. McClurkin to lead in prayer; J. C. Boyd to read the Original Covenants; J. Christy to read the bond; Dr Houston to deliver the address; J. Christy to lead in the subsequent exercises until the act of covenanting is complete; and that the fast-day be on Friday, June 6th. This report was accepted and adopted.” With this we may connect the account given in the Magazine of the final adoption of the confession of sins and the bond. “The order of the day was called for, being the further consideration of the Bond of the Covenant and Confession of Sins; and after additional amendments, the Confession of Sins and the Bond of Covenant Renovation were unanimously adopted. J. M. Wilson was appointed to have printed five hundred copies of the draft of Covenant Renovation, for the use of the members of Synod, and to have this draft written on parchment for subscription.”

We shall conclude with some extracts from letters, between the Synod and other Churches, on this solemn and important subject. The Irish Synod, in a letter to the American Synod, say, “Dear Brethren,—With more than ordinary interest we have learned that you have been guided—we trust by a gracious influence—to adopt measures for the Renovation of the Covenants of our fathers; and we feel humble and thankful, when you state that our unworthy efforts in the matter of Covenant Renovation have been, in any respect, instrumental in stimulating beloved brethren to seek after the enjoyment of the same high privilege. For ourselves, we have all reason to praise the name of our fathers' God that, as a Synod, we were led to contemplate the work of public covenanting, and that we were honoured to engage

in it. Though, for a time, we had some difficulties in the matter, we had abundant evidence of guidance from on high, and of divine support, in this whole undertaking. As we proceeded, obstacles gave way, and light was shed upon our path. When we were honoured to lift up our hands and avouch renewed allegiance to our exalted King, we were brought to cherish more cordially the love of the brotherhood; and since we stood before the Lord to enter into his Covenant, the effects have been visible in the singular harmony and cordiality which have characterized all our intercourse and ecclesiastical proceedings. The influences, too, have been felt to be most salutary upon the congregations in which the work of Covenant Renovation has been essayed. Attachment to the great principles of our fathers' Testimony—the abounding love of the brethren—and an earnest desire to advance the kingdom of Christ, are among the precious fruits of this auspicious movement. From the heart-felt conviction that we have been owned and blessed in avouching the Lord God of our fathers as *our* God, we rejoice that you are about to engage in the great work of covenanting. We shall continue to watch your proceedings in this matter with the deepest interest; and we shall not cease to pray fervently that you may largely realize such seasons of revival and refreshment from the presence of the Lord, as have ever attended acts of faithful dedication."

In reply to the above letter from the Irish Synod, the Synod in America say,—“A part of the present session of Synod was spent in perfecting the bond and confession of sins, prepared at our last meeting, with a view to the renewal of our Covenants. We had hoped to be privileged with lifting up our hands at this time, and taking upon us the oath of God; but as our sessions were unusually protracted, we concluded that it was best to defer this solemn work till our next meeting. We trust that, by the blessing from above, we shall be prospered in this great service, to which the voice of God is evidently calling us. Pray for us, that our gracious Master may grant us tokens of his acceptance.”

The Reformed Presbyterian Synod in Scotland sent a letter also to this meeting of the American Synod; and though the Scottish letter makes no reference to covenanting, the American Synod, in their reply, say, “The subject of the renewal of our Covenants has occupied a large share of our attention at both the last and the present meetings of Synod. We have finally adopted a form of covenant and confession of sins, and have appointed the first two days of our next meeting, May 1857, to essay the great work. May we hope for an interest in your prayers, that God would so direct us, as that we may be enabled to swear in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness.”

We do not know whether, in asking the prayers of the Scottish brethren, the Americans were aware of the Glasgow “Report;” but we fear that they will not obtain their request, for the Scottish brethren, if they act consistently, can only tell them that their proposed Covenant Renovation is an “impossibility,” a “contradiction in terms,” and “a thing which cannot really have any existence.”

The American Synod, in reply to a letter from the Associate or

Secession Synod of North America, writes in reference to Covenant Renovation in the same strain; but our space will not permit us to give more extracts at present.

ARCHITECTURAL ARGUMENT AGAINST POPERY.

THE following article, quoted by the *Bulwark* from the *Brighton Herald*, will be read with interest, and is worthy of being recorded. It contains a very striking exposure of the groundlessness of the Popish claims to a very high antiquity, and an exposure of the folly and incongruity of adopting *Popish plans for Protestant Churches*—the title of the paper as contributed by the writer to the *Builder*:—

"A very interesting article bearing this title has been contributed to the *Builder* by Mr John Elliot, architect of Chichester and Southampton, with whose name and ability our readers are already familiar. We take the most striking passages from this communication, which will be read with great interest both by builders and theologians.

"After referring to a dispute between Mr Tite and Mr Scott, architects of great repute, as to the suitability or unsuitability of mediæval architecture for Protestant purposes, Mr Elliot proceeds:—

"It may be an unpleasant fact, but it is a fact notwithstanding, an indisputable one too, that *all* the early churches, up to the ninth century, are purely Protestant in arrangement, and that the chief of these important witnesses for the truth are in the custody of the Pope at Rome. It is a fact, also, that St Peter's itself, at the head-quarters of Popery, is nearer the Protestant type than any of the mediæval structures. How came this to pass? Why, the reason is as clear as crystal—that there was pre-Protestantism at Rome *before* Popery.

"Old Rome contained some 400 temples: its people had no conception of religion, except in connexion with temple rites and arrangements. Although the Jews had but one temple, yet to them also was that the embodiment of all their ideas of worship. Would, then, Jew or Pagan, in becoming Christian, even so much as dream of giving up the temple type, if their new creed admitted of its retention? That they did give it up, and choose another arrangement (though retaining the same *style* of architecture), as different from that of the temple as a horse from an eagle, is overwhelming proof that, in their opinion, the time for temples, with their rites, altars, and priests, had passed away for ever. Call it by what name you will, the primitive Christian Church was nothing but a large room—its old familiar designation was 'Conventus,'—the meeting-house. The president, elder, or minister, as he was indifferently called, sat on a slightly raised platform, with a cancelli, or low open railing, on its edge. There was no screen between the elder and his brethren—the people; and in the *midst* of the latter stood the communion-table, which was always of wood, and moveable. What an astounding change was this from all Jewish or Pagan customs! This change was clearly a sudden disruption of all old thoughts: it was verily a new dispensation; and the architectural arrangements for the old and the new religion thus became, at the very outset, as wide as the poles asunder, old precedents being not merely shaken off, but wrenched off.

"The change from primitive Christianity to Popery was, on the contrary, the gradual work of many ages; and it thus happened, that in Italy they continued for nearly 1000 years to build churches on the original model, though that model was no longer suitable to the religion taught in it; while, away from Italy, in countries of new converts, where no architectural precedents existed to fetter the imagination of the builders, and the architects being then chiefly *priests*, the new churches were arranged to suit the peculiar requirements of the Popish system; and nothing can be more striking than the contrast between the plans of these new structures and of those old ones still in the custody of Rome. The doctrine of Transubstantiation was the chief cause of this extraordinary change of arrangement in ecclesiastical structures. As the Popish view of the Sacrament gained ground, the chancel, or elder's

platform, on which the communion-table never was originally placed, became gradually lengthened, and separated from the people by screens. The chancel, in fact, was converted into a mock temple, containing, as in the real temple of old, only the priests and the altar; while the nave was made to correspond in use with the temple porticos, in which the people assembled to witness, through the gates of the holy place, the performances of the priests within. A mediæval cathedral is, in truth, a cross between two opposite systems of arrangement, and two different systems of religion.

"The doctrine of Transubstantiation cannot, of course, be discussed in your columns; but this much may be said about it, that no antiquarian, versed in the architectural history of temples and churches, can possibly, if sane and honest, imagine for one moment that the early Christians, if they had had any knowledge of such a doctrine, could, by any possibility, have given up the temple models, so admirably adapted for its display, or have eschewed altars for wooden tables.

"It is now some years since that I made the discovery, and announced the fact in your columns,—that there is not a single church in existence, erected before the tenth century, that contains any one original feature characteristic of Romish views. If any one of these old structures now displays a Virgin Mary niche, altar, saint chapel, screen, or chancel, in the modern or Popish acceptance of the term, then I affirm and pledge myself to prove, that all or any of these things are additions of comparatively late date. A Protestant was recently conversing with a Jesuit on the subject of Transubstantiation, who said in reply, 'Really, my friend, you have done me a most signal favour: you have so clearly demonstrated the utter absurdity and groundlessness of my views on this doctrine, that my belief in it in future will be an act of the sublimest virtue.' I have endeavoured to render this sort of service to those who are building churches for Protestants on Popish plans. I am sadly afraid, however, that the sublimity of their faith may be somewhat tarnished by the great pecuniary advantage to be found at present in its profession. Though objecting to mediæval arrangement, I share in Mr Scott's admiration of the mediæval style; but it is certainly very provoking to find people so absurd as to call the latter Popish or Protestant: style is the tongue of architecture, and speaks all creeds. What on earth is there to prevent us using the one without the other? Does any one doubt this? Then let him study the origin of roast pig. Charles Lamb tells us, that in China, for many years, they kept these animals without any culinary knowledge of their virtues. In course of time, a house was burned down, and the owner, poking about among the ruins, thrust his finger into something soft, which proved to be a martyred porker; and, on licking the said finger, experienced such a delicious flavour that it inflamed him to madness. Getting another pig into another house, he burned that also to enjoy another feast; and house-burning became the rage to an alarming extent, until the fortunate discovery was made that roast pig could be obtained on easier terms. Like roast pig, mediæval architecture is truly admirable; but we need not, to obtain it, outrage common sense and common honesty, or destroy our common Protestantism by adopting Popish plans, of which the style is but the accidental accessory."

AN APPALLING PHASE OF MODERN POPERY.

IF in the preceding article the groundlessness of Popish pretensions is demonstrated by an appeal to witnesses whose testimony admits of no denial; the desperate wickedness which Popery sanctions, and the horrible means which it is capable of deliberately employing for accomplishing its ends, are disclosed in the darkest aspect in the society which has been formed in Italy, of which we have an account in the *Watchman*, as quoted by the *News of the Churches*, under the following title:—

EXTRAORDINARY ASSOCIATION IN DEFENCE OF THE PAPACY.

In his letter denouncing the doctrine of political assassination, M. Maugin affirmed

that many of the murders perpetrated in Italy, which have done so much injury to the cause of liberty in that country, and which have been exclusively laid to the account of the Liberal party, were the acts of the partisans of Austro-clerical despotism; and that the church itself has lost much of its authority, because, with a view to its material interests, it has not always recoiled from the use of means which sound morality invariably reprobates, nor has it rejected, as it should do, the aid of instruments themselves perverted, and the cause of perversion to others. The organs, whose interest it is to perpetuate a system condemned by morality as well as by Christianity, have of course pronounced such an assertion calumnious. Nothing, however, is more true.

In Central and Southern Italy there has existed for years a certain sect known as the *Sanfedesti*, or Defenders of the Faith. That sect, organised after the fashion of a secret society, and under the denomination of *Cattolica Apostolica Società dei Sanfedesti*, is placed under the patronage and protection of the police; and its avowed object is the defence of the "throne and the altar," to be attained by the extermination of the Liberals by all the means in their power. The following is the form of oath taken by every new brother on his admission:—

"I, N. N., in the presence of the Almighty God,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, —of the ever immaculate Virgin Mary, of the whole celestial court, and of thee, honoured father, swear to let my right hand be cut off, my throat cut, to die of hunger amid the most atrocious torments, and I pray the Lord God Almighty to condemn me to the eternal pains of hell, should I betray or deceive any one of the honoured fathers or brethren of the Catholic Apostolic Society, in which I this moment enrol myself, or should I not scrupulously fulfil its laws, or not render aid to my brothers in need of it.

"I swear to hold firm in the defence of the holy cause which I have embraced, not to spare any individual belonging to the infamous gang of Liberals, whatever be his birth, parentage, or fortune, not to have pity for the tears of infants or of the aged, and to shed, even to its last drop, the blood of the infamous Liberals, without regard to sex or rank.

"Finally, I swear implacable hatred to all the enemies of our holy Roman Catholic religion, the only true one."

The execrable association, whose bond of union is such an oath, is said to be recruited from among the dregs of the population,—vagabonds, spies of the lowest caste, liberated convicts, brigands, thieves, and, in a word, all that is most vile and criminal in the country. Strong in the support of the police, from which it expects in every case impunity, and in some even reward, the *Sanfedesti* Society, while occupying itself zealously in the pursuit of its main object, the extermination of the Liberals, by no means neglects private interests. Is a jealous husband or a troublesome creditor to be got rid of, or any other obstacle to the gratification of passion or cupidity to be removed, the remedy is at hand, and the duty of exterminating an infamous Liberal is the excuse and justification for crime. The society is an asylum where a malefactor may be protected, and to which he may resort whenever he has cause to apprehend the pursuit of justice.—*Watchman*.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

Duty; or, Ability and Present Action Contrasted. By a Layman. Edinburgh: Paton & Ritchie; Shepherd and Elliot.

WE hail the appearance of this pamphlet from the pen of a Layman, as being at once seasonable, and indicative of the rising spirit of inquiry regarding the pecuniary claims of the Church upon professing Christians. The title is singularly unfortunate, as failing to give any distinct idea of the special branch of Christian duty which the author

designs to discuss. In consequence of this, the pamphlet will be less attractive to those whose interest is awakened chiefly by external appearances. The subject, however, is discussed in a clear and liberal spirit, and we cannot but rejoice that a Layman is found giving his head and his heart to the study and exhibition of God's claims upon Church members. The subject is unpalatable to many with a high profession, but we doubt not the statements made will find a cordial response in the hearts of all those who have studied duty in the light of Scripture, and who make the Divine precepts the rule of conduct.

The pamphlet was written in prospect of the May Meetings of ecclesiastical courts and other religious associations; and is dedicated to "the members of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland,—of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,—and of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church;" while it embraces more generally, "the various Religious and Philanthropic Societies who meet annually in London and Edinburgh." Apparently secure in her temporalities, the members of Assembly of the Established Church will feel little concern with the subject of spontaneous liberality, and still less sympathy with what may seem voluntary taxation for the support of divine ordinances. But even to such, the subject is wisely commended, and to no Church is it more deeply important. The present age is one of mighty changes, when every system is being severely tested, and many which are deemed secure may be found vanishing before the rising tide of liberalism and the legislation of expediency. As nations long enjoying peace require most skill and energy in equipping and drilling raw recruits when the general peace is broken; so those Churches which have been doing least for self-support in a period of tranquillity, require most to be aroused to duty when ecclesiastical and political changes are passing over the world.

To the Free Church the subject is common-place—having not only occupied a prominent position in her constitution as first developed, but having also grown with her growth and strengthened with her strength in the progressive acts of her administration. But though much has been done in comparison with what was usual within the pale of the Establishment, much more would require to be learned by her members in general, if she is not resolved to make her ministers the victims, while her members enjoy the full exercise of their rights and privileges. It is to be feared, that even amidst the boasted liberality of modern efforts for the sustentation of the ministry, the Mirror would reflect but a dark shadow of the individual efforts of her zealous members.

It seems passing strange that such an appeal should be dedicated to the United Presbyterian Church in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It might have been supposed, during the rage of the Voluntary controversy, that Christian liberality would have known no bounds, and that, long ere now, the advocacy of the Voluntary principle would have shown a model Church, with an overflowing treasury. But to our utter astonishment, the writer of the pamphlet before us appeals to the statistics of that Church in such a way as to present the

most lamentable disregard of Christian duty in the support of divine ordinances. "It is supposed," says the writer, "that the regular attendance of members and adherents of the United Presbyterian Church amounts to upwards of 200,000. We make a fourth of that number the groundwork of our calculation, on the understanding that 50,000 at least must be productive parties, and so able to contribute." And what is the result? Tell it not among the advocates of the Establishment principle! According to the rule of contribution laid down in the "Financial Mirror," these 50,000 would contribute the sum of £237,705 sterling annually—that is, according to the same calculator, £137,705 more than the actual income of the whole Church, embracing within her pale 200,000 members and adherents. Surely the Voluntary principle, *as such*, must be wanting in some of these liberalizing ingredients which tend to produce harmony between the public profession in a system and the individual practice of those by whom it is maintained. It is evident that the "Financial Mirror," invented by a Layman, ought not only to be patented by the Church, but speedily introduced to the home of every member.

But let not other sections of the Church which have been overlooked in the dedication, think that they have no need of such an instrument. There is reason to apprehend that, though in the smaller sections of the Church the rate of contribution is much higher than in the larger; yet there are found parties in all sections who would be much the better of a daily look into the "Financial Mirror," which might at once lessen their expenditure in worldly display, and increase their liberality towards the Church of God. To all them we say, "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." Neglect of duty in the support of divine ordinances is the God-dishonouring sin of Christendom, to which the majority of professors ought to plead guilty. In every thing else there is calculation, and the balancing of claims, where man only is concerned; but here how few ever seriously consider what are the claims of God in proportion to the benefits which He bestows! While to "stop payment" among men is esteemed a disgrace; to "stop payment" in the support of the cause of God is a matter treated with perfect indifference by the individual conscience, and excused and palliated by the Christian community. How few are found, in the light of Scripture inquiry, regarding their substance as Paul did his person on the day of conversion—"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

But we must allow the writer to speak for himself, before introducing his "Financial Mirror." "His sole aim," he tells us, "is, if possible, to arouse the Christian public to a sense of duty, in some measure commensurate with the extraordinary openings in Providence which the course of events is daily unfolding for advancing their common cause." That is, the efficient maintenance of the Church, where already existing, and her extension throughout the world. Could the mind of man possibly be directed to a more honourable and ennobling object? And yet, while civilized nations rise as a man in supporting the work of desolating war, when national honour is supposed to be invaded, the strongest appeals find no response in the hearts of many

professing Christians, when the honour of God is at stake, in the existence of his Church, and the subjection of the world to Christ in accordance with the promises ! It seems not the design of the writer to enter at length upon the scriptural arguments which may be adduced in support of Christian liberality. He leaves that for others ; and we think he is right, while the pulpit is under obligation to enforce the duty upon the conscience as much as any other propounded in the Sacred Volume. As a practical business-man, his object is rather to present an arithmetical reflector, by which every man may see at once his pecuniary position, his bounden duty, and his actual conduct.

There is one point which deserves special consideration,—the fact that his supposed calculations begin with those in humble life, and rise in *compound proportion* to those in affluence and independence. The claims upon the income that is barely adequate to meet the present necessities and exigencies of life are justly low, while those upon incomes far more than sufficient for present wants or future contingencies are as justly rated in the compound ratio. This brings out distinctly the Bible principle of contribution,—that the offering must be according “as the Lord hath prospered,”—and that “where much is given, there also shall much be required.” There is one point in the descending scale which we would have desiderated. As in arithmetic we begin with nothing and ascend to millions, so in Christian contribution we must begin at the absolute negation of means and substance, and rise through the fractional uncertainties of the most precarious subsistence to the fixed and stated income. The pauper, passing from door to door, is not left beyond the claims of God’s Church ; and though, like the desolate widow of Sarepta, he may possess only his handful of meal, he must not refuse the divine claims when legitimately made by the authority of heaven. It is universally admitted, that the poor find means to provide for the gratification of their lowest lusts and appetites in the service of Satan. Is it impossible, then, for the Christian poor to find the “widow’s mite,” though they cannot cast their pounds into the treasury of the Lord ? We do not admit the idea of “unprofitable parties” within the pale of the Church. That there are such in all churches, and in the various classes of society, we grant ; but that any party should be exempted from taking part in the maintenance of God’s cause, we utterly deny. The constitution of the Church, and the claims of God as put forth in the Bible, meet the case of the humblest of Church disciples as fully as that of the most exalted in wealth among the people. Under the former economy, the poorest had to bring their offering.

In presenting his “Financial Mirror,” the author prepares the way by the following, among other pertinent observations :—

“1st, The great question with every true Christian ought to be, *What is required of me towards maintaining and extending gospel privileges?*”

“2nd, *Not to look to others*: you have nothing to do with them, unless it be to furnish, in your individual case, an *example* of true discipleship, instead of looking for one. None can answer for his brother in the day of final account.”

"3rd, To enable members of the Church, male and female, to answer the above questions intelligently, they are requested to look steadily upon the Mirror we present them—it reflects truly. Having first found the measure of their station—or, in plain terms, the amount of their earnings or income—then the proportion of those indicated in the table as expected from them—let them no longer halt betwixt two opinions, but immediately *resolve*, then *act*."

The Mirror referred to by the author is furnished in four tables, of which we give the first, which is the leading one:—

Suppose Income to be		Suppose Contributions to be		Proportion of Contribution to Income.
Weekly,	Which is Annually,	Weekly,	Which amount to Annually,	
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
0 8 0	20 16 0	0 0 1	0 4 4	96
0 12 0	31 4 0	0 0 2	0 8 8	72
0 16 0	41 12 0	0 0 4	0 17 4	48
1 0 0	52 0 0	0 0 6	1 6 0	40
1 5 0	65 0 0	0 0 8	1 14 8	38
1 10 0	78 0 0	0 1 0	2 12 0	80
*2 0 0	104 0 0	0 1 6	3 18 0	27
3 0 0	156 0 0	0 2 6	6 10 0	24
4 0 0	208 0 0	0 4 0	10 8 0	20
5 0 0	260 0 0	0 5 0	13 0 0	20
6 0 0	312 0 0	0 6 0	15 12 0	20
7 0 0	364 0 0	0 7 6	19 10 0	18
8 0 0	416 0 0	0 10 0	26 0 0	16
10 0 0	520 0 0	0 12 6	32 10 0	16
15 0 0	780 0 0	1 0 0	52 0 0	15
20 0 0	1040 0 0	1 10 0	78 0 0	18
25 0 0	1800 0 0	2 0 0	104 0 0	12½
30 0 0	1560 0 0	2 10 0	130 0 0	12
40 0 0	2080 0 0	4 0 0	208 0 0	10
60 0 0	3120 0 0	6 0 0	312 0 0	10

* *Example.*—If my income be £3 a-week, or £104 a-year, then I am asked to contribute 1s. 6d. a-week, which is £3 18s. a-year,—the 27th part of my income."

In making out the rate, and filling up the schedules for income or other taxes, parties find no difficulty in fixing upon the items and the accumulative amount of their incomes. It is just as easy in the case now before us: and if the tax assessor requires a declaration and appeal to conscience for the rectitude of the items transmitted, ought there not to be a reference to the same arbiter, scripturally enlightened, when we are called to meet the claims of the Universal Proprietor? We admit that no human tables can absolutely fix the proportion; but there are specific injunctions and moral principles regulating the duty of man to God in these pecuniary things, as explicit as those which regulate our conduct in the same matters in dealing with our fellow-men. While we ought to avoid every thing tending toward the discharge of duty in a business or mercantile spirit, this is advantageous in making calculations, so that we may be just in marking the claims of God, as well as in discharging our obligations to our fellow-men.

We regret that space forbids even a notice of the leading points in the dialogue by which the introduction of the Mirror is succeeded, and with which the pamphlet closes. The dialogue represents a congregational meeting, to which the "Financial Mirror" is introduced. Those taking part in the discussion are happily described by their respective titles, such as "*Innovation*," "*Thoughtful*," "*Let-well-alone*," "*Consideration*," "*Caution*," "*Slow-to-believe*," "*Doubtful*," "*Practical*," and several other minor characters. But to see fully the bearings of each objection and argument, the pamphlet must be read. We commend its earnest perusal, convinced that it will amply repay the unprejudiced inquirer, while it cannot fail to reprove those who enjoy such distinguishing privileges, and yet live in the neglect of the plainest Christian duties.

The Gathering Storm, or Britain's Romeward Career; by the Rev. Edward Marcus Dill, A.M., M.D. Edinburgh: Johnstone & Hunter. Glasgow: J. R. M'Nair.

THIS book is not to be judged by its striking title, nor by its size, but by its intrinsic merits. The talents, position, experience, and character of the esteemed author give him a right to be heard upon such a subject. In consequence of his early acquaintance with the workings of the system of Popery in Ireland, and of his accumulating knowledge of the views and feelings of Protestants towards it in that country, he is perhaps, in some respects, the best qualified of living authors to sound the trumpet of alarm in this day of Britain's danger. After a concise introduction, in which the perils of Protestantism are graphically depicted, and the apathy of Protestants fully exposed, the author proceeds to demonstrate the grounds of his indictment in a style terse, vigorous, eloquent, and conclusive. The first chapter treats of "Britain's Romeward Career," showing that the grand conspiracy is at present poisoning the sources of social influence, and affecting the seats of civil power at home and abroad. The second chapter treats of the guilt which it involves, considered in the light of "the system which is so favoured, the nation which favours it," and the circumstances by which it is peculiarly aggravated. Here Popery is treated in a style that puts to shame the mincing sentiments of thousands of public and private Protestants in this falsely liberal age. He speaks of the system, not as historically viewed in the minds of men—who speak of Rome's apostacy as if it were a Church—but as it was predicted in the Book of inspiration, and has proved itself in fact, the grand conspiracy of Satan against the rights of God and man. Thus, at page 38, when treating of the system so favoured, he gives us the inspired portrait of Rome:—

"And going first to God's unerring Word, those Protestants with whom it has grown fashionable to speak of Rome in soft and cushioned phrase, and denounce as bigots those who cannot do so, are now solemnly conjured to hear what the Lord himself hath spoken. Harken to the epithets the Holy Spirit absolutely heaps upon her:—'The Beast,' or wild beast—'The Great Red Dragon'—'The Whore'—'The Great Whore'—'The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth'—'That Wicked'—'The Man of Sin'—'Babylon the Great'—and, as though all these were insufficient,—'The Mystery of Iniquity'—an epithet the

more fearful because designed to represent Rome as the grand antagonist of the Gospel, 'The Mystery of Godliness.' We ask, to what other false system does Scripture apply anything like this fearful list of epithets? and that they are meant to apply to Popery, all Protestants must admit, for their own standards maintain it. Yet, as though these were not sufficient, we have a not less fearful list of prophetic portraits, in which Rome is represented as a woman seated on a beast, 'full of blasphemies;' in her hand 'a cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication,' and herself actually 'drunk with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus;' with many similar pictures, which, for all that is revolting, have nothing approaching them in the Sacred Volume, or in any other."

In the third chapter, Dr Dill treats of "the folly which favour to Rome manifests, as affecting and counteracting all our evangelistic efforts—all our philanthropic agencies—and all our secular pursuits."

The fourth chapter exhibits "the danger it entails,"— dangers, "civil and social," "moral and spiritual." Nothing could be more convincing than the array of facts adduced, and nothing more dreadful than the moral, social, and physical results which must necessarily ensue.

The last chapter proposes to treat of the "duties which it demands;" and here, for the first time, we must take leave to differ from the esteemed author. In all that he has previously advanced, we cordially concur. The view given of Popery is just the view propounded by the most distinguished Reformers. It is the view presented in the standards of the Church of Scotland, and embodied in the National Covenant, and Solemn League and Covenant of the three Kingdoms. It is the view maintained by the Martyrs and Confessors of the persecuting period; and the view which has been held by genuine Seceders since their ejection from the National Church, during the reign of time-serving Moderatism. It is the view maintained in the Testimony of the Original Secession Church down to the present day. It is the view for which her ministers and members have been stigmatized as bigots, because of opposing the Emancipation Bill, the Endowment of Maynooth, and every other measure by which we are brought into social relation with that doomed system. Taking, then, our stand upon Bible ground, and reading our duty in the light of history, we would propose other measures than have been propounded by the writer before us. He proposes the withdrawal of the Maynooth Endowment—"that all indulgence should be withheld—that nunneries should be suppressed—that Parliament should be reformed—that the people should be aroused by information." We would go further than this. We would, in addition, seek the repeal of the Emancipation Act, and place Papists, as they are by profession, among the subjects of the Papal King at Rome,—in the position of aliens among a free and loyal people, who are tolerated, but not incorporated. This in itself would be a reform in Parliament, and prevent for ever the Romanizing policy of the "Irish Brigade."

In showing how the work ought to be done, the Doctor refers specially to the Scottish Reformation Society—in its plan, its machinery, its operations, and its results. We do not question the wisdom displayed in its plan *as an association*, nor the ability and efficiency of its agents; but we must be permitted to say, that we are constrained to dissent from its constitution, because of the limited basis on which it is founded, and because of the restrictive operations which it must

necessarily carry out. It corresponds not with the view given in this work of Popery as depicted in the Bible, nor with the position of the Church and the State to the Anti-Christian system. Its testimony is neither so full nor so explicit as the Word of God demands: hence many of its most zealous members would oppose the repeal of the Emancipation Act, while pruning off some of the excrescences which have ever sprung, and must ever spring, from that God-dishonouring measure.

What we desiderate to meet the danger, is a revival of the distinguishing principles of the Covenanted Reformation. The Reformers of ancient times were not satisfied with lopping off a few of the branches—they struck at the root of this moral Upas, and in their Bonds and Covenants pledged themselves to God, and to one another, to seek its utter extirpation. To exclude Papists from all places of power and trust, is no persecution; because, by their own voluntary act, they are incorporated with a foreign policy. They are confederates in that “conspiracy” which strikes at once at the rights of God as Moral Governor, and the rights and privileges of man in all the domestic, ecclesiastical, and social relations of life. What we would desiderate, then, would be the revival of true religion in the land—the return of the Churches to the great principles of the Covenanted Reformation—and the purification of the State, by the raising to seats of power men fearing God, and seeking power for the good of the people. We believe that it is only by the Church in its legitimate sphere, and by the State faithfully discharging its legislative and administrative duties, that Popery can be met, and the “grand conspiracy” to reduce Britain to the See of Rome, be rendered ineffective. Seeing that the danger is so eminent, all surface measures are in vain: nothing less can meet the emergency than a return to the position and principles so faithfully embodied and applied in the First and Second Reformation. We have reason to believe that Dr Dill’s principles and views would lead him to this same resting-place—this solid and expansive platform, from whence to withstand and attack the enemy. The whole reasoning of his volume leads to this impregnable stronghold. Might we entreat him to introduce as boldly the means of defence, as he has exhibited the impurities of the Anti-Christian system, where, even though the ranks might be thinned, and though many timid and sympathizing Protestants might turn back, he might be the means of uniting the real and tried friends of Scotland’s Presbyterianism, who might, as on former times, turn back the hosts of the “aliens.”

We cannot close without recommending the volume to all our readers. It is one which ought to have a place in every family. We hope ere long to see a second edition, in which “the work to be done,” and the means of doing it, shall be so enlarged, as to furnish a real counterpart to the preceding pages of this interesting volume.

Concordance of Metrical Psalms and Paraphrases. Edinburgh: Paton & Ritchie. London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co. Glasgow: T. Murray & Sons. 1856.

THIS work is designed to serve the same purpose, in relation to the metrical version of the Psalms, that the ordinary Concordances do to

the prose version of the Scriptures in general. As it is the metrical version of the Psalms that has generally the largest place in the memory, this work will be of great use to ministers and others, in at once directing them to the appropriate passages, in seeking which considerable time is sometimes spent. In the language of the preface, "It will save time, by pointing out immediately, not only the precise passage that is wanted, but every passage in which a similar expression occurs. It will effect that which no acquaintance with the Book of Psalms in prose, even though aided by an ordinary Concordance, can accomplish. It will thus prove useful to the minister in his preparation for the pulpit."

SHOTTSBURN CONGREGATION.

PRESENTATION.—At the close of a public Prayer-meeting, conducted by the Rev. E. Ritchie of Ayr, on the evening of the 24th July, in the congregation of United Original Seceders, Shottsburn, the ladies belonging to the congregation presented to the Rev. John Ritchie an elegant writing desk and a purse of 25 sovereigns, in token of their esteem for him as their pastor. Mr John Russell, the eldest member of session, having been requested to occupy the chair, very interesting and enlivening addresses were delivered to a numerous audience, by the chairman, Messrs Whitelaw and Jeffrie, elders, and by their pastor and his father. Mr Ritchie has been settled in Shottsburn only a year and five months. This proof of his people's regard for him cannot fail to be highly encouraging to him, in the second year of his ministry.

At the suggestion of a much respected friend, who takes a lively interest in the welfare of the congregation at Shottsburn, and of the Original Secession Church in general, the following remarks are appended to this report:—

"From the appearance of this congregation on various occasions, when visited by some of the members of Synod, we believe they have only to suggest to one another the propriety of making similar arrangements for any useful purpose, and the thing can soon be done, with very little effort, or almost any pecuniary sacrifice that would be felt by any one; and if every congregation in easy circumstances were to do something of the kind, it would add considerably to the benefit and encouragement of ministers,—might serve equally as useful a purpose as a supplement to their stipend;—and if this was found generally to be acted on, probably a larger proportion of the Mutual Assistance Fund might be supplied to the weak congregations, or those ministers, as the case may be, whose income is small."

HONORARY DEGREE.—Our readers will be much gratified to learn that Columbia College, one of the most respectable in the United States, at its 108th anniversary, recently held, conferred the degree of D.D. on the Rev. John Blakely, of Kirkin-tilloch. His lately published work, "The Theology of Inventions," has procured him this honour, an edition of which has been issued from the American press, with the following recomendatory note from the pen of Dr Knox of the Collegiate Dutch Church, New York:—

"Having been favoured by a respected friend with a copy of *THE THEOLOGY OF INVENTIONS*, by the Rev. John Blakely, immediately on its issue from the Glasgow press, I have read the larger portion of it with great interest and delight. It is the work of a master mind. The subject is original in its conception, and is treated with consummate ability. The Divine superintendence in works of invention is demonstrated, and the illustration which they afford, in their nature, order and respective dates, of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, is presented in a form the most compact, lucid, and impressive; exhibiting the author's large, accurate, and diversified knowledge, in a style terse, vigorous, and graceful.

"The work only requires to be known, to obtain the widest circulation. The Messrs Carter confer a favour on the reading community by its republication.

"JOHN KNOX.

"New York, Jan. 21, 1855."

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REMINISCENCES OF THE EARLY TIMES OF THE
SECESSION — HISTORICAL, BIOGRAPHICAL, AND
TRADITIONAL.

FIFESHIRE—ABERNETHY, &c.*

THE shire of Fife is one of the many districts of Scotland particularly distinguished as the scene of important ecclesiastical events. Within its boundaries are several ancient seminaries of learning, from which were promulgated the principles of truth or error, according as they were held by the simple and pious Culdees, the superstitious devotees of Rome, or the true worshipper of Jesus Christ, the Protestant. "So early as the year 700, the island in Lochleven was bestowed on St Serf, and the Culdees residing there serving God. They afterwards formed a settlement at St Andrews, and such was their reputation in the tenth century, that Constantine III. took up his residence among them, and died a member of their community." With the exception of the Culdees, the Scotch, at that period, were living either in a state of barbarism, or, like the rest of the world, "wondering after the beast," and groaning under the iron grasp of Popery. About the beginning of the fifteenth century an attempt was made to introduce the doctrines of Wyckliffe, the English reformer. The emissaries of Rome took the alarm, and immediately prepared the necessary instruments for a fiery persecution. In 1407, an English priest—a disciple of Wyckliffe—named John Resby, came over to Scotland, and was very active in propagating the doctrines of his Master. But he did not long enjoy his liberty. He was seized by Lawrence, Abbot of Lindores, and,

* The writer of this paper is indebted to the following sources for the materials of which it is composed:—MSS. kindly furnished by Mrs Moncrieff of Barnhill, by Perth; the late Mr Gray of Brechin; "Christian Magazine;" "Secession Fathers," &c. &c.

after being convicted of holding forty different heretical opinions, was condemned to the flames. He was burned at Perth, with all his books and writings, in the year 1408. That was the first instance of martyrdom for religious opinions in the history of Scotland; and like all such acts of oppression, it had only the effect of increasing the zeal of the party it was intended to suppress. The news of Resby's death reached Bohemia, and the confessors of the truth there, so far from being intimidated, sent over one of their number as a missionary, Paul Cawar, a physician by profession, but likewise a mighty man in the Scriptures. He also was burned at St Andrews, testifying cheerfully his unshaken faith in the written word of God. Shortly after these events, Patrick Hamilton, George Wishart, and Walter Mill, successively suffered martyrdom for the faith of the Gospel, at St Andrews; and so alarmed were the Romish priesthood at the rapid spread of heresy in Fifeshire, that the execution of David Stratton, a landed gentleman, who was condemned to be hanged and burned for the same cause, was ordered to take place at Greenside, ^A to the intent that the inhabitants of Fife, seeing the fire, might be stricken with terror."

During that dark period, the Culdees, notwithstanding that their faith was in many respects erroneous and superstitious, were the means of preserving portions of the Scriptures and a partial knowledge of the true religion. They had several places of worship, and schools for education, throughout Fife, such as at St Andrews and Abernethy; and it has been observed, that when the Reformation broke over the land, the preachers of the "evangel" received the heartiest welcome in those places. The Reformation in Scotland was neither a political nor an ecclesiastical movement, but a great work of God both among ministers and people; and hence the great difficulty which Popery has ever found in rooting it up. The Standards of the Church of Scotland and the writings of the Reformation Divines took a deep root in their hearts, and long after the glories of the Reformation had died away under the lurid clouds of Moderatism, her doctrines and principles were warmly cherished in many a family circle. Throughout the western parts of Fife in particular, a stream of piety might be traced from the earliest Reformation downward; and during the period between the Revolution and the Secession of 1733, when religion was generally at a low ebb, there existed there a degree of vital godliness rarely to be found in other parts of the country.

In our sketches of the Early Times of the Secession we have frequently found it impossible to be precise as to dates, and the circumstances connected with its introduction and progress in particular localities; but here we have had none. Abernethy, a parish lying partly within the western boundary of Fife, was not only the scene where one of the "four brethren" laboured and bore a public testimony for the cause of Christ, but the centre of an extensive district from whence the Secession movement flowed for many miles around. From the causes already alluded to, and the faithful ministry of the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff, a spiritual awakening had taken place, to some extent, in the parish several years before the Secession; and when that important crisis arrived, the people were prepared to make

an intelligent stand for the truth along with their minister. We have abundance of material before us in confirmation of these remarks; but as our space only admits of the briefest outline of the subsequent events, we shall confine our narrative chiefly to the public career of Mr Moncrieff, who was a principal actor in the ecclesiastical movements of the time.

Alexander Moncrieff was born in the year 1695, and being the eldest son, inherited from his father, who died when he was about thirteen years of age, the estate of Culfargie, in the parish of Abernethy. Being thus early deprived of his father, the young heir of Culfargie was left to the care of his mother; but, by a kind Providence, this loss was greatly made up by her singular qualifications for the task both by nature and by grace. Her maternal solicitude was in due time rewarded. At an early period of his life, an intense desire was begot in his heart for the holy ministry, and from his worldly position and prospects in life, there is ground to believe that the desire was the product of the Holy Spirit. The history of his paternal grandfather, the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff of Scoonie, appears to have had a powerful influence in the formation of his mind, especially in producing that attachment to the principles of the Reformation which he so ardently manifested during his after life.

Moncrieff of Scoonie is a name of frequent occurrence in the history of the suffering period of the Church of Scotland. He was the counterpart and companion in trouble of the martyr Guthrie, whose fame is embalmed among the "Scottish Worthies." Along with many more, he suffered severely during the Commonwealth for refusing to own the usurper Cromwell, and after his unworthy sovereign was restored to the throne, he again suffered for his loyalty. In 1661, he was cast into prison along with James Guthrie. His lady applied to the Earl of Athole for his release, but was positively refused, unless she prevailed on him to make certain concessions to the Government. Her reply was worthy of a "lady of the Covenant:" "You know," she said, "that I am happy in a good husband; yet I know him to be so steadfast in his principles, that nobody need deal with him on that head: and for my part, before I would do anything that would break his peace with his Master, I would rather choose to receive his head at the cross."

It was the distinguished privilege of young Moncrieff to be the descendant of such noble and pious ancestors; and it was his still higher privilege to be endowed with a large share of the same spirit; and, judging from his patriotism, piety, and indomitable spirit, we cannot doubt that he would have followed in the same honourable, though trying course, had Providence so ordered it.* But to our subject. Alexander Moncrieff passed through the branches of education common to youths of his rank in the Grammar School of Perth; he then studied for four sessions at the University of St Andrews, where he

* It was the remark of an old divine, that "grace does not run in the blood, but has frequently been seen to run in the line." We thoroughly repudiate, however, the idea broached by the Rev. James Lumsden of Barry, in his recent publication on *Baptism*, that believing parents may infallibly secure the salvation of their children.

took the degree of Master of Arts; and afterwards in the Divinity Hall under Professor Haddow. He was, however, one of those youths who possessed an intense desire for the study of science, and not being satisfied with the means of prosecuting the higher branches at St Andrews, in September 1716 he proceeded to the famed University of Leyden in Holland, where he completed his studies under the celebrated John a Mark and his cotemporary Wesselius. Although his application to study at Leyden was extremely arduous, being engaged upwards of thirteen hours a-day, the Church of his fathers occupied a deep place in his mind. The case of Professor Simpson for teaching error was then in dependence before the General Assembly; and having made himself acquainted with what was doing so soon did he manifest that love of the truth which shone so conspicuously in his latter days, that he set apart a portion of time when the Assembly was sitting for special prayer, and also wrote a pamphlet in defence of the doctrines which Simpson had impugned.

But while Moncrieff was a diligent student in every department of his education, and excelled by few of his class-fellows, an education of a higher character, and from a deeper source, was going on in his heart. So early as his seventeenth year, he began to feel an engrossing concern about the salvation of his soul; and so deep were his convictions, that often he was made to cry out, "What must I do to be saved." After returning from college in May 1712, he paid a visit to his maternal uncle, the minister of Largo, from whom he seems to have derived much spiritual benefit. While there, he would have retired to the churchyard for secret prayer, and would have been heard pouring out his heart to the God of his salvation. Nor were his supplications unanswered: the great Physician who had inflicted the wound, and caused him to feel the bitter anguish of being dead in trespass and sin, stood ready to heal, and by his word and promise, gave him peace and joy in believing. "At the communion at Largo," we find him saying, "I got more of a broken heart on the Sabbath-day than I ever found before—it was a day I ought never to forget. I hope my sorrow was genuine and evangelical." Again, "O what I felt at the second sacrament I participated of at the Rhynd! I hope I got a real manifestation, and an earnest of heaven. O it is good to be about His hand! Many a temptation I had; many a struggle with corruption; many a time was I foiled; but thanks be to God who giveth the victory."

Such is a specimen of the Christian exercise and experience of a youth who had only passed his seventeenth year; and may we not see in it an earnest of those graces and qualifications with which he was so remarkably gifted, both as a preacher of the gospel, and a public witness for the cause of Christ? About the period when these sentiments were put on record, we find him advancing a step farther in the Christian course, by personally devoting himself, soul and body, in covenant to God. This was done at Culfargie, on the 11th July 1712, and consists of ten parts, of which the following is the substance:—
"A full belief in all that God has revealed concerning the fall of man and the way of salvation through Jesus Christ; a confession and

renunciation of all sin, original and actual ; an acceptance of Christ in all his offices, and of his purchased salvation ;" and concluding with this solemn devotement :—" And I here do endeavour, through his strength, to surrender myself, and give myself to him, in soul and body, mind, heart, and affections, and to devote myself to him alone, and to his service." This covenant was renewed on the 15th October following, and again at Perth, on the last Sabbath of July, before joining in the ordinance of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

With these notices of the youthful and pious heir of Culfargie, brevity requires us to pass on to that period when he entered on his public work as an ambassador of Jesus Christ. His academical and theological studies being completed, he returned from Leyden in 1717, and soon thereafter was licensed by the Presbytery of Perth a preacher of the Church of Scotland. In 1719, the parish of Abernethy became vacant, by the death of the Rev. Mr Dunning, and, as neither patrons nor the judicatories of the Church had begun to exercise the despotical spirit which they afterwards did, in the filling up of vacant charges, a moderation was granted on a request from the parishioners, which proved to be in favour of Mr Moncrieff. The moderation took place in April 1720, when the call was found to be the almost unanimous expression of the people, sixty-one members and thirteen heritors having subscribed it. In the month of September the ordination followed, on which occasion Mr Moncrieff of Methven, a relative of the Culfargie family, preached and presided. "In giving the ordination charge, it is said, he displayed great fidelity in warning his kinsman against the temptations which might arise from his connections in life, and exhorted him on no account to allow his position in society to interfere with the faithful discharge of his ministry. This freedom proved displeasing to nearer relatives who were present ; but, on its reaching the ears of the young minister, he remonstrated with them, declaring that he regarded the expressions referred to as just and seasonable, and avowing his determination, through grace, to keep all that he possessed on earth, in property or influence, subservient to the sacred office with which God had invested him."

About two years before his ordination, the "Marrow Controversy," which occupies a prominent place in the history of the period, commenced in the Church of Scotland. As it would be travelling out of our way to enter minutely into the merits or details of that controversy, suffice it to say, that it resulted in the condemnation of some precious Bible truths by the General Assembly—there being only twelve (afterwards known as the "Marrow-men") who appeared in their defence. Mr Moncrieff was not then in a position to take part in the public measures adopted by the evangelical minority ; but the controversy continued for a considerable time after he was settled at Abernethy ; and, notwithstanding his extreme youth, we find him in 1721 admitted into, and taking an active part in, the counsels of such men as Hogg and Boston, in devising means for checking the current of error then threatening the entire subversion of the Church. Indeed, so deeply was he set for the defence of the gospel, that, on witnessing the unfaithful decision of the Assembly of 1726, in the case

of Professor Simpson, having obtained leave to speak, not being a member of court, he charged the Assembly with a flagrant dereliction of duty.

From that time till 1732, the name of Culfargie, his common designation, seldom appears in the published ecclesiastical records of the period. There is no reason, however, to suppose that he was idling away his time at home, by giving way to the snares against which he had been duly warned, or indifferent to what was going on in the Church at large. On the contrary, we have good evidence of his exemplary diligence in his ministerial and pastoral duties; and so assiduous was he in the discharge of these, as to bring upon him the infirmities of a premature old age. Nor did he labour in vain. Not only did he have the promised blessing of Him who had called him to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, but was also privileged with not a few positive marks of the fruits of his ministry. In the parish of Abernethy there lived a young gentleman, the representative of a wealthy family, whose lot it was not only to be the heir of a large estate, but what was better, to be the descendant of a race of godly ancestors. Contrary to their example, however, he was an open profligate, setting at defiance all restraint, human and divine. His excellent young wife was neglected and broken-hearted, and instead of promoting the comfort of his home, he revelled in the haunts of drunkenness and impiety, while his fine estate was rapidly wasting away. As a natural consequence, his constitution in a few years was broken down; his conscience became his accuser; the instructions and prayers of his godly parents, which he had neglected and despised, came fresh before his mind, and, by a conviction of his awful condition, was nearly thrown into the depths of despair. He was a great sinner, but he was also a chosen vessel of redeeming love; and when lying at the point of death, the Lord in his mercy passed by and bade him live, and put into his lips a song of praise. The first evidence of the change was a gush of affection to his injured wife, and embracing the occasion, she said with much tenderness, "Shall we send for our worthy minister, Culfargie?" The minister was sent for, and in a short time was at the sick man's bedside. The scene was a painful one to both parties: the pastor was overcome with grief, and the penitent borne down with insupportable anguish. Mr Moncrieff addressed him briefly, yet faithfully, and left him to his own reflections. On reaching home, he told the servant not to unsaddle his horse, and to be ready at a moment's call. The servant obeyed, but was astonished at such unusual orders. The mystery was soon explained. The minister retired to his study for prayer, and during the whole night he was heard wrestling, prostrate on the floor, with strong cries and tears for the heart-stricken penitent—"the poor perishing son of his friend." Early in the morning he paid him another visit. In the interval a wonderful change had taken place with both parties. The one, like the patriarch Jacob, had been wrestling with the Angel of the Covenant, and feeling assured that he had prevailed, wore a benignant smile. The other had undergone a saving change, and, clothed in his right mind, like a little child, was sitting at the feet of the Redeemer. "O, Culfargie!

come away," cried the gentleman, the moment he saw him, "my heart has been broken by the terrors of your message; and how I have longed these slow morning hours past to see your face again!" That was a joyful moment for Culfargie. He sat down, and secretly sending up a prayer for wisdom to speak a word in season, discoursed to him of the atoning blood and perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. We cannot afford space for the memorials of the intensely interesting conversation which followed, but on the word of one who was present, we may say "it was an hour of thrilling joy to all." The gentleman recovered from his bodily distress, lived to a good old age, giving clear and convincing evidence that he was in very deed a prodigal reclaimed. Such is an instance of Mr Moncrieff's earnestness and faithfulness in dealing with the souls of his people. Being a gentleman himself by birth, he knew what deference was due to the great of this world; but in the things of God he knew no man, and manifested an equal desire for the salvation of both rich and poor.

Mr Moncrieff was frequently called in Providence to take part in the public questions of the day; but it does not appear that he was naturally disposed to controversy. As a disciple of Jesus, he was a man of peace; but as watchman on Zion's walls, he knew it was his duty to cry aloud, and give warning when the enemy approached. In a comparative portrait of the "four brethren," he was described as having the "face of a lion," and, certainly, so far as boldness in the defence of truth, and an utter detestation of every temporising expedient was concerned, the description was true. When a mere youth, as we have seen, he took part in the case of Professor Simpson. Although not one of the *twelve* Marrow-men, he was admitted to their counsels, and encouraged them by his presence and support; when Ebenezer Erskine was subjected to the "warm reasonings and brow-beatings" of church courts, he remained by his side when older brethren drew back, content to purchase worldly advantage and a false peace at the expense of truth; and when the important crisis of 1733 arrived, he was one of the "four" who tabled their protest before the Commission of the General Assembly, declaring their adherence to all the principles of the Church of Scotland, and a *Secession* from those who were striving judicially to subvert them.

The veneration which Mr Moncrieff entertained in common with his brethren for the Church of his fathers, rendered this separation peculiarly trying, and cost him many a pang. But the course of duty to his mind was clear, and that was enough. Considering himself really a minister of the Church of Scotland, he continued to preach in the parish church till his deposition by the Assembly in 1740. The civil authorities felt the task too odious to eject him; but as the last link which connected him with the Established Church was now broken, with a characteristic determination and becoming dignity he never entered its pulpit again, and, exposed to the snows and storms of a whole winter, preached to his attached people in the open air. With his church he also lost, as a natural consequence, the emoluments of his office; but how much importance he attached to them may be judged from the fact, that he granted a site for a church, and several acres

for a glebe, from his own estate; bore the greater part of the expense of erecting the building; and, what was more, never accepted of a farthing of stipend during the remainder of his ministry. Few, indeed, of a similar rank in life have set their heart less on the world. He merged entirely the country gentleman into the laborious Christian minister, and gave little heed to the increase of his worldly substance. When one suggested to his oldest son certain improvements which would give the estate quite a new appearance, he replied with considerable emphasis, "New! my father cares for nothing new but the *new* Covenant."

It is matter of thankfulness, that the Secession Fathers, notwithstanding the hostility of both Church and State to the principles of the Reformation, were not driven to extremes—either of "Cameronianism" on the one hand, or "Voluntaryism" on the other. Their attachment to the principles of the Church continued unbroken, and the whole aim and design of their Testimony was to bring her back to former purity and faithfulness; and although frequently accused by the Tory rulers of the day with treasonable designs, they manifested an equal attachment to the reigning family. However little appreciated at the time, their loyalty, like that of the Covenanters of a former age, was carried almost to a fault. In the rebellion of 1745, when the safety of the country was threatened, they offered a positive resistance to the Pretender. Some of them incurred great personal risk and loss of property on that account. One Secession minister, at least,* assumed the uniform, and took his place among the royal troops; and, as a Synod, they offered to the Government to raise a regiment from among their people. Mr Moncrieff was a true loyalist;—he not only prayed for the reigning monarch in the presence of the rebels, but refused to pay the cess they were exacting in support of their cause. Nor did he escape personal loss. "A party of officers and men, not content with taking away his cattle and furniture, carried off his eldest son to prison, and threatened his life if a rescue was attempted, which the exasperated people were on the point of doing. But none of their plunderings or threatenings could induce Cullargie to any compliance."

The public proceedings of the Secession ministers is now matter of history, on which we do not require particularly to enter here. In all their judicial proceedings, and especially in the preparation of papers, Mr Moncrieff took his full share of the work. After being seventeen years in the ministry, ten of which were in the Secession, he was (in 1742) unanimously chosen professor of divinity, the office having become vacant by the death of the venerated Wilson of Perth. For the responsible duties of that office he was peculiarly qualified; and to his superior and diversified learning, extensive acquaintance with the Scriptures, and unbending moral principles, has been ascribed the high-toned, evangelical, powerful, and popular preaching of the gospel which so distinguished the first race of Secession ministers. "His great ability, zeal, and faithfulness," says a writer of his own day, "was manifested in the character and usefulness of a great number who, in the course of twenty years, were trained up by him to the work of the ministry."

* Ebenezer Erskine.

A few years after the period of which we are writing, the Secession ministers who had been so pre-eminently useful in reviving and promoting the Reformation cause in Scotland were led into a controversy among themselves, which ended in a breach and final separation. We refer to the controversy about the Burgess Oath. One party believed the oath could not be taken consistently with an adherence to the Testimony; the other believed that it could, and the contention became so sharp, that in 1747 they parted asunder. Mr Moncrieff took part with the former, and afterwards became a leading man in the anti-Burgher branch of the Secession.

However sad the "breach" in itself was, the great Head of the Church overruled it for good. Both parties continued with unabated zeal the good work they had begun, and the chief rivalry between them was, who would most promote religion in the land. Mr Moncrieff, by his unwearied labours in training students for the ministry, supplying vacant congregations, and in visiting destitute parts of the country, contributed largely in extending the Secession. Among other places, it was his practice for a number of years to make an annual tour to the north of Scotland, and to preach where an opportunity offered. It was on one of these journies (1749) that he was led to preach in the open air at Craigdam, in Buchan; and the sermon delivered on that occasion laid the foundation of the congregation there, which, in its turn, so remarkably spread Secession principles in that extensive district. By these visits he acquired great popularity as a preacher, and created a desire in the breasts of many to hear more frequently from his lips the gospel of Christ. The distance between Craigdam and Abernethy is upwards of 120 miles, but that was not an insuperable obstacle to those anxious inquirers after truth; and, on communion occasions, not a few of them encountered the journey in order to be present at the dispensation of the Lord's Supper there. The sacramental occasions at Abernethy were long memorable events in the Secession, when some thousands of persons from all quarters would have assembled to keep the solemn feast. Vital religion was in a very thriving state among Seceders at that period, and at these gatherings, evidences of the presence of the Holy Spirit were not wanting. They would have begun to assemble on the Friday evening, and as other accommodation was not to be had, they would have formed into parties in the neighbouring wood, and from this temple of nature's building, an eye-witness records, "the song of praise and the *sough* of prayer might have been heard during the silent watches of the night." It was on one of these remarkable occasions that the hours of the Sabbath were found too short for the work of the day. "Several thousands," writes one, "eagerly sought admission to the Lord's table; service after service followed, and the hours of the Sabbath drew to a close, and still there were some who had not commemorated the Lord's death by tasting the symbols of his broken body and shed blood. Such requests could not be refused. Mr Moncrieff rose and addressed the multitude in these terms:—"The Sabbath is over; but the work of the Sabbath is not over: let us consecrate a part of the Monday

morning to the Lord's service; which he accordingly did by solemn prayer."

From Abernethy as a fountain, the Secession ran in many streams, particularly towards the south and east of Fife. For a considerable period, Sabbath parties from Ceres, St Andrews, Cupar, and Ferry-Port-on-Craig, travelled regularly thither to enjoy ordinances under Mr Moncrieff. The attachment of these persons to the cause was strikingly exemplified in the fatigue and privations of these journeys. The inclemencies of the weather had little consideration from these sturdy sons of the Covenant. During the winter months, when they had to travel for hours in the darkness of the morning, they literally trimmed their lamps to pilot them through the moorland track of the country; and when the grateful beams of Phœbus broke over the eastern hills, they deposited their temporary guides in a bush till their return. These bands of worshippers had their resting-places by the way, some of which are still held in sweet remembrance. One of these favourite spots was a gentle elevation or *knowe* near by the beautiful village of Balmullo, and there the bands from the east would have met and enjoyed for a brief space social intercourse and prayer; and many a pious wish was offered up that the Lord would grant them a more permanent resting-place there. Their prayers in this respect were at length answered; for on the very spot a place of worship was erected, and continues to this day a memorial of the early times of the Secession.

The arduous labours which thus devolved on Mr Moncrieff began to tell on his physical powers, even in early life; but he was never known to yield to personal considerations when duty required him to be at his post. His two sons, Matthew and William, were both trained to the ministry, and in 1749 he had the happiness of receiving the eldest as his colleague in the charge of the congregation. For twelve years afterwards he continued to discharge his professional and ministerial duties, and gave an admirable example by his punctual attendance on church courts. Years, however, ran on apace. In the summer of 1761 his strength began rapidly to fail, and it became evident that his public services were drawing fast to a close. In August of that year he attended the funeral of the Rev. Mr Brown of Perth, and on coming into the room where the mourners were assembling, he remarked to some present,—“My brother has got the start of me. It was a question whether he or I would be first removed. The Lord has decided it. He knows who are ripe.”

For some time previous to his death, he had a lively sense that the time of his departure was at hand; but he was anxious to consecrate his last hours in the service of Christ. About two weeks before his removal, he took a journey of forty miles to carry out measures he had planned for supporting a weak congregation, which proved to be his last public service in the Church below. The fatigue was doubtless too great for his exhausted frame, and he survived his return only two or three days. He died on the 7th October 1761, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and forty-second of his ministry. His last moments

were spent in breathing out praises to the God of his salvation. On the Sabbath after his funeral, his son and successor addressed the sorrowing congregation on these touching words:—"His disciples came and took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus."

It is impossible, at this distant period, to estimate correctly either the pastoral labours or the more public services in the Church of Mr Moncrieff. But this we can confidently say, that few have done more in spreading abroad the knowledge of the name of Christ, and the best monument that could be erected to his memory on earth, were his extraordinary labours in forming congregations, and planting among them the standard of the cross. In the great day, when all secrets will be revealed, we cannot doubt but many will rise and call him blessed, as being the means of bringing them to Christ; but even here he was not without encouragements, as we have seen that his labours were not in vain in the Lord. His position in society sometimes afforded him an opportunity of speaking a word in season, where another might not have had access. Having one Sabbath morning met a country gentleman of his acquaintance, who had just set out on an excursion, he rebuked him firmly for his profanation of the Lord's Day. The rebuke gave deep offence, and the gentleman asked, "Who gave you a right to impede my movements?" To which Mr Moncrieff replied, "You will learn that at the day of judgment," and instantly walked off. The words had the desired effect. The reprov'd party, after pausing for a little, gave up his amusement, and returned to his home. Being naturally of a warm temperament, he was occasionally apt to give way to his feelings, especially in matters of controversy; but so sensible was he of this infirmity, that it led him to constant watchfulness and prayer, and, in his maturer years, his victory over it was all but complete. As a preacher, he was excelled by few of his cotemporaries for clear exhibitions of Bible doctrine, power of expression, earnestness of application, combined with a peculiar facility of laying hold of passing incidents for pressing home his subject. When preaching at Perth, on a certain occasion—in the Glover's yard—after the concluding psalm was sung, he rose to pronounce the blessing, and looking for a moment at the multitude who had been listening to him so eagerly, and joining so heartily in the song of praise, he addressed them thus:—"My friends, I shall tell you one thing before I dismiss you, and that is, that if the thorns of the State were as sharp as the thorns of the Kirk, there are some of you here to-day who would have been singing psalms in heaven."

The young of the congregation were also the objects of his special care. In his public discourses he seldom forgot to have a word for them; and, taught by experience the advantage of early piety, he was anxious to see them brought to Christ in the days of their youth. Nor was his care of them confined to his public ministrations; he had set times for meeting them in the family circle, and at the district "examination," and, by these means, he was instrumental in making them both intelligent and pious. One of his members happening to be in Perth, being asked by a friend how the ministers of Abernethy were doing, replied,—"Culfargie is every Sabbath pressing the young to

close with Christ, and Mr Matthew is preaching as if the day of judgment were to-morrow."

But, among his numerous and varied qualifications, in nothing was he more distinguished than as a man of prayer. Every event, public or private, it may be said, gave him an errand to a throne of grace. Not merely was it his practice to engage in secret prayer three times a-day, but at other times, as circumstances occurred, would he have retired for this exercise. Even when in company, it was no rare thing for him to rise from his seat, and, as if looking out at the window, ejaculate a secret prayer up to heaven. So deeply was his mind imbued with a devotional spirit, that, sometimes forgetting his position, he converted the pulpit into the closet. An instance of this kind is recorded, when an old woman looking up, and observing the minister absorbed in mental devotion, said to the person beside her, "See! there's Culfargie away to heaven and left us all sitting here."

On the death of Mr Moncrieff, Matthew, his son and colleague, was fully installed as minister of the congregation, and we believe there have been few instances of the kind where the same harmony and unanimity prevailed. Nor was the congregation mistaken in their choice. In every aspect he sustained the reputation of his father, both among his people and in the public affairs of the Church. Every one, however, has his own natural disposition, and Matthew Moncrieff's was strongly characterized from his very boyhood with a species of eccentricity. When a youth of twelve or thirteen years of age, a stranger minister happened to call at the house, when all the family were absent but himself. In the circumstances, he thought it becoming to entertain the stranger, and invited him to take a walk into the garden. Having familiarised himself a little with the minister, he put the question to him, "What do you think of the professors of our day?" "Well," said the stranger, "I really do not know." "You don't know," rejoined Matthew; "well, I'll tell you what I think,—there are just two sets of them. The one class are for doing everything, and will not let Christ do anything; the other class will do nothing, and would have Christ do everything." "Aye, well, well," said the minister, "you may be right." "But," continued Matthew, "which of them do you think will go to hell first?" "Well, I cannot say," replied the astonished visitor, "that is a grave question." "Well, Mr — I'll tell you—just them that die first."

Having been left by his father entirely free as to the choice of his profession, he was for some time a student before he decided the important point; and it was purely his own spontaneous act to cast in his lot with the Seceders. Notwithstanding his peculiar turn of mind, he was a pious youth; and, when admitted to the office of the ministry, was deeply moved by its great responsibilities. He is described as a most effective pulpit orator, commanding at once the attention of his hearers, and instructing their minds in the knowledge of divine things. His discourses were in general very brief, seldom exceeding twenty minutes, but deeply striking and impressive. Adam Gib having heard him preach one day, remarked, that "every note was like the going off of Mons-Meg." But his labours in the vineyard were only for a short

period. Six years after his father's death, the Lord saw meet to call him to himself. He died in the year 1767, being the forty-second of his age and eighteenth of his ministry.

Abernethy continued long to be a place of great resort to Seceders, even after numerous branches had been cut off and become distinct congregations, and it was owing, in a great measure, to the faithful and disinterested labours of the Moncrieffs, that the Secession Standard was so speedily planted in many parts of Fife.

THE ATONEMENT.

Zech. iii. v. 8, 9, 10.

BESIDES renewing the covenant of the priesthood with Joshua, the Lord, at the same time, renews the promise of the Saviour, to shew that the Aaronical priesthood should not supersede the priesthood of Christ, but should terminate in it.

"Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee; for they are men wondered at: for behold, I will bring forth my servant The Branch." These words, like the preceding, were addressed to Joshua by Christ, the Angel of the Lord; but they are to be regarded as the language of God, in the person of the Father; for the last clause shows that Christ is now speaking in the Father's name. Not merely Joshua, the high priest, but both he and his brethren, are here addressed—"thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee." These were the ordinary priests, over whom the high priest presided when they sat with him in council to assist him in judgment and in determining matters of the Lord, and who also aided him in the public daily service of the sanctuary. They are enjoined "to hear," or to pay the utmost attention to what the Lord is about to announce to them; and this call to listen denotes that something of the highest importance to themselves and to the Church was now to be communicated. What he is about to tell them is specially intended for their comfort, for they were invited to hear because "they were men wondered at." Joshua and his fellows were, like the Psalmist, "a wonder unto many," or like Isaiah and his godly remnant, and like Christ and his people, they "were for signs and wonders in Israel." When their enemies saw that they were few in number, and engaged in the great work of building the temple, they wondered by what motives they were actuated and by whose assistance they hoped to accomplish their undertaking. The wicked saw their strict observance of God's laws and ordinances, and wondered, and thought it strange that they ran not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of them. The congregation of Israel saw that the whole work and service of the priesthood were typical, and wondered, and inquired what these things meant? The Lord therefore invites Joshua and his fellows to listen to what was calculated to encourage and support them amid the scorn and derision of their enemies, and to afford a satisfactory expla-

nation of the design of their office, which was intended to prefigure Christ.

"For behold I will bring forth my servant The Branch." This is an announcement which might well make Joshua and his fellows wonder in their turn. In the most exalted sense, the Father here calls Christ "his servant," a designation frequently given to him in Scripture, because he was from all eternity appointed to the office of Mediator, and undertook to do the Father's will for the salvation of mankind sinners. He also calls him "The Branch," not for the first time, but as already revealed and known by this very emblem. Isaiah thus speaks of him, "Behold a rod shall come forth from the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots;" and Jeremiah foretells, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous Branch." He receives this designation because he was to become the Son of man, to descend from David according to the flesh, to be the seed of the woman, and to be the most illustrious and distinguished person ever born into the world. The Father promises "to bring him forth" by sending him into the world in the fulness of time, preparing a body for him, and exhibiting him openly to view as God manifest in the flesh.

Again, the Lord invites Joshua and his fellows to the consideration of the person, office, and work of Christ by another figure in the following verse—"For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone there shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." By this time, the foundation-stone of the second temple was laid under the inspection of Joshua, amid the shoutings of the young and the loud weepings of the aged. Joshua and his fellows are enjoined to regard this stone with serious attention and deep meditation, not simply on its own account, but chiefly as an emblem of Christ, the foundation-stone of the building of mercy. This living foundation-stone was laid decretively by the Father in his eternal purposes, doctrinally in the promises and predictions of his word, and was soon to be actually laid, in the fulness of time, by Christ's coming in our nature into the world to finish the work which the Father gave him to do. In language similar to that here used, the Father thus invites mankind sinners, by the prophet Isaiah, to the exercise of faith in Christ—"Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone—a sure foundation,—and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." That the foundation-stone of the second temple, laid before Joshua, prefigured Christ, appears from the remaining clauses of this prediction.

It is here foretold that "upon one stone shall be seven eyes." A great concourse of people assembled at the laying of the foundation-stone of the temple, and many eyes were upon it, for it was a most interesting sight to God's ancient people, brought back from captivity; but Christ, who is God manifested in the flesh, is a far more wonderful and glorious object of contemplation—"upon one stone there shall be seven eyes." Seven is the number of perfection among the Jews, and denotes plenitude and universality. These words,

"Upon one stone shall be seven eyes," are therefore equivalent to the expression, all eyes shall be upon it. When the Son of God became man, the seven eyes of the Lord were upon him; for the Father says of him, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The eyes of holy angels were upon him; for when the Father "bringeth his first-begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him." The eyes of Old Testament saints were upon him, for Abraham saw his day afar off and was glad—"these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off;" and on the mount of transfiguration there appeared Moses and Elias talking with him. The eyes of all believers who have lived since his coming are upon him, for they look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith. The eyes of devils were upon him with suspicion, dread, malice, and rage; for when they saw him, they knew him, and cried out, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high?" The eyes of wicked men were upon him from his birth till his death, to watch and persecute him, and to take and crucify him. And the eyes of all shall be upon him at his second coming. "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

It is farther predicted of this stone:—"I will engrave the graving thereof saith the Lord of hosts." The foundation-stone of the second temple was probably hewn and polished with great care, and it might have suitable devices and inscriptions carved on it. In allusion to the pains which are sometimes taken to adorn the foundation of a great building, the Father says of the living foundation-stone of the Church,—"I will engrave the graving thereof." It was He who prepared a holy human nature for him, furnished it with all gifts and graces of the Spirit suitable to the work given him to do, and who, as the great law-giver and Judge of all, required obedience and satisfaction from him as the surety of mankind sinners. It pleased the Lord to bruise him and put him to grief. He made His soul an offering for sin. And it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. The stone thus engraved by the Father bears the inscription, "Jehovah Tzidkenu"—the Lord our righteousness.

The blessed consequence of this is expressed in the last clause:—"And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." The foundation-stone of the temple, laid before Joshua, did not remove the iniquity of God's ancient people, though it was a notable evidence of his being reconciled to them as a nation, and pacified towards them for all that they had done; but in consequence of the laying and engraving of the living foundation-stone, the Lord promises to remove the iniquity of that land in one day. The land here referred to is the land of the Jews, where our Lord was crucified.

It is evident that this expression cannot be understood in the universal sense of the removal of all the sins of all mankind, without admitting universal salvation; but as the latter is contrary to the

whole of Scripture, another meaning of the language here employed must be sought for in full harmony with the word of God.

Let it be considered that there is a threefold removal of iniquity mentioned in Scripture. One by pardon, expressed in that prayer, "Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously." Another by sanctification, as in that promise, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." And a third by atonement, or by the obedience, sufferings, and death of Christ as a surety, for he is said to finish transgressions, make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. He is also called "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." Pardon removes the guilt and punishment of sin from sinners themselves. "As far as the east is distant from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Sanctification removes the love and power of sin from their hearts and nature. Hence those who are sanctified are said to be "renewed," and to be "new creatures." Satisfaction made by the surety removes from him the curse and the debt of sin imputed to him, and also from God the injury and dishonour which sin does to him, and thus procures the removal of it from the transgressors by pardon and sanctification. Accordingly, Christ is said to have been "loosed from the pains of death," and to have given "himself an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour." The removal of iniquity by pardon is frequently occurring in every generation of men; its removal by sanctification is gradual and progressive, but its removal by the surety is in one day. It is therefore to the last of these that these words refer:—"I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day," for Christ "was once offered to bear the sins of many," and he "hath, by one offering, for ever perfected them that are sanctified."

Again, let it be considered that there are in the hand of God, the Judge of all, two great rolls or records of iniquity,—the one containing all the sin of the world which is to be removed, and the other all the sin of the world which shall never be removed. It is plainly the former which is referred to when God says, "I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day;" and that is the iniquity of all the elect who were from eternity chosen in Christ as their representative and surety. Hence he calls them "the men given to him out of the world." In the case of those who lived under the Old Testament dispensation, the removal of their iniquity by pardon and sanctification required the removal of it by the surety, for "God hath set him forth a propitiation, through faith in his blood, for the remission of sins that are past," and his death was intended "for the redemption of transgressions which were under the First Testament;" so also, in the case of those who live under the New Testament dispensation, the removal of their iniquity by the surety, demands the removal of it by pardon and sanctification; for "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, and present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

These words,—“I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day,” contain an allusion to the great day of atonement, on which a ceremonial atonement by the blood of slain beasts was made for all Israel. As a nation, Israel were God’s chosen and peculiar people. They were, therefore, a figure or emblem, not of all mankind, but of all the elect—the “Israel of God,”—and, by the satisfaction of Christ, a true atonement was made for every one of them. In one day—the great day of atonement—the day on which satisfaction for sin was completed by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross,—all the sin which God removes from men by pardon and sanctification, from the beginning till the end of time, was removed as to its penal consequences from the surety; hence he is said to have been “justified in the spirit,” and to have died unto sin once, and we are told that “sin has no more dominion over him,” and, as to its atrocious effects, was also completely and for ever removed from God and from his throne, so that, in “forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin,” he does “by no means clear the guilty,” and is just in justifying the ungodly.

The concluding verse contains an external picture of the happy fruits of the atonement of Christ to all believers,—“In that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour, under the vine and under the fig-tree.” There may be in these words a reference to the time of Christ’s coming into the world to expiate sin. It was when the gates of war were shut—when there was a cessation from arms, and universal peace,—and the Jews were inviting one another to sit down and converse together under the vine and fig-tree. But the language seems rather intended to describe the blissful consequences of Christ’s finished work, in removing the iniquity of his people. Israel’s inviting one another with all brotherly affection to the enjoyment of peace, shelter, rest, intercourse, and refreshment, under the shade of the mantling vine and broad leaved fig-tree, is a lively emblem of the spiritual liberty, safety, happiness, and communion with God and with one another which true believers enjoy through the atonement of Christ, and by means of his Word and ordinances, and of their ardent desires and efforts to make others partakers of his salvation, revealed and freely offered to all in the gospel. “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely.”

A believing view of Christ in his person, office, and work, sustains and comforts his people in the most trying circumstances. Joshua and his fellows were men wondered at; but for their consolation and encouragement, they are invited to behold Christ, the promised Saviour, as the foundation of their peace, hope, and joy. In his office, he is the Father’s servant; in his incarnation, he is the Branch; in his person, he is the living “Foundation Stone;” in his obedience, sufferings, and death, he is the Tried Stone—tried by the eyes of all, for “on one stone shall be seven eyes,” and tried by the hand of divine justice,—“I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of Hosts.”

We are here taught what is the true nature of atonement. It is “the removal of iniquity.” Nothing but atonement can do this; and

atonement infallibly does this, in regard to all for whom it is made, and to all the parties concerned in it. That atonement which does not remove from God the injury and dishonour which sin does to him, and from the surety, the penal consequences, or the curse and the debt of sin that he took upon himself, and from sinners, the guilt and punishment of sin, is all a delusion. It has no foundation in the Word of God, and no place amongst men, save only in the blinded imaginations of those who err from the faith.

It is only when their iniquity is removed that men can enjoy true rest and peace. The removal of their iniquity, and rest and peace as the blessed fruits and consequences of it, are the privileges of all true believers in Christ. It is not necessary to our believing on him for salvation, that we know for how many of the human race, and for what individuals the atonement was made; it is a sufficient foundation for our faith in him, to be told by God in his Word that his own Son is the ransom he has found for mankind sinners, and that he makes a free gift of him to us as a Saviour. The call of the Gospel is, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls: for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

[The following Extract from *Hopkins on the Millenium* is inserted, as containing an able exposition of the sentiments on Christian Union, which have been advocated in our pages, without committing ourselves to all the forms of expression employed, and, in particular, to some statements which seem to imply that the understanding of man would judge aright in matters of religion were it not for the bias given it by the evil affections of the heart, or that the guilt of wrong judgment arises exclusively from them; for we hold that the corruption which the fall has entailed extends to all the powers of the human soul, and that there is sin in blindness of mind, as well as hardness of heart.]

AGREEMENT IN THE KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF OF THE TRUTH ESSENTIAL TO CHRISTIAN UNION.

In that day, men will not only be united in peace and love, as brethren, but will agree in sentiments respecting the doctrines and truths contained in the Bible, and the religious institutions and practice which are there prescribed.

Professing Christians have been, from the beginning of Christianity to this day, greatly divided, and have opposed each other in their religious sentiments and practices, and are now divided into various parties, sects, and denominations, while all appeal to divine revelation, and profess to take their sentiments and practices from that.

It has been often said by some professing Christians, and is a sentiment which appears to be spreading at this day,—that difference in religious sentiments, and in attendance on the institutions of the gospel and modes of worship, is attended with no inconvenience, but is rather desirable and advantageous; and that by this variety Christianity

is rendered more agreeable and beautiful. That it is impossible that all men, whose capacities and genius are so different and various, and their minds and way of thinking and conception are naturally so far from being alike, should ever be brought to think alike, and embrace the same religious sentiments. That this difference in man's belief and sentiment cannot be criminal; for men are no more obliged to think alike than they are to look alike, and have the same bodily features and stature. All the union that is required, or that can take place, is that of kind affection, love, and charity.

But such sentiments as these are not agreeable to reason or Scripture. Error in judgment and sentiment, especially in things of a moral nature, is always wrong; and does not consist or originate merely in any defect of the natural faculties of the mind, but is of a moral nature, in which the taste, affection, or inclination of the heart is concerned; and, therefore, is always, in every degree of it, morally wrong, and more or less criminal. Were the moral faculties of the mind—were the heart perfectly right, man would not be capable of error, or of judging wrong, or of making any mistake, especially in things of religion. The natural faculties of the mind, of perception and understanding, or reason, considered as separate from the inclination or will, do not lead, and have no tendency in themselves, to judge wrong, or contrary to the truth of things. To do so, is to judge without evidence, and contrary to it, which the mind never could or would do, were not the inclination or heart concerned in it, so as to have influence, which must be a wrong inclination, and contrary to the truth, and, therefore, morally wrong or criminal.

Therefore, all the mistakes and wrong opinions which men entertain respecting the doctrines, institutions, and duties revealed in the Bible, are criminal, and of a bad tendency. They must be so, as they are contrary to man's obligation and duty to believe all revealed truth; and are wholly owing to a wrong bias or inclination, or the depravity and corruption of the heart. What God has revealed in his Word, he has declared to man—to be received by him, and believed to be the truth, of which he has given sufficient evidence. And the man who does not believe what God has clearly revealed, and of which he has given sufficient evidence, even all that can be reasonably desired, does abuse and pervert his own understanding, and shuts his eyes against the truth, and refuses to receive the testimony which God has given. And who will say there is no crime in this?

Since, therefore, all mistakes and errors contrary to the truths made known in the Bible are criminal, and owing to the corruption of the heart of man, then perfect holiness will exclude all error, and there neither is, nor can be, any wrong judgment in heaven; and in the Millenium, which will be a greater image of heaven than ever was before on earth, holiness, light, and knowledge will rise so high, that the former errors, in principle and practice, will subside, and there will be a great and general union in the belief and practice of the truths contained in divine revelation. As there is but "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism," so in that day men will be united in the belief and profession of this one faith—in the system of doctrines re-

vealed in the Bible,—which then will appear plain, and with the clearest evidence to all. And they will have one common Lord—will understand and obey all the commands of Christ; and they will know what are the institutions and ordinances which Christ has appointed, which are all implied in baptism. They will understand what is the import of this, and implied in it, and be united in sentiments and practice, so as to form a beautiful happy union and harmony, which will put an end to the variety and opposition of opinions and practices which now divide professing Christians into so many sects, parties, and denominations. The whole Church, with all the members of it, which will fill the earth, and include all mankind then living, will in that day come to that to which the gospel tends, and is designed to bring it. It will “*come in the unity of the faith*, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That they shall be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of man, and the cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive: But, speaking the truth in love, shall grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” Then, agreeable to the wish and injunction of the Apostle Paul, Christians will “all speak the same thing, and there will be no divisions among them; but will be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.” Then the inventions and prescriptions of men, both in doctrines and modes of worship, and in Christian practice, will be abolished and cease. The Bible will be then understood, and be found a sufficient and perfect rule of faith and practice, in which all will agree, and will “join with one mind and one mouth to worship and glorify God.” Then the weapons of the gospel—the truths of divine revelation—being preached, understood, and received, will cast down the imaginations of men, and every high thing introduced by the pride of man, which now exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and will bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” “And the Lord shall be king over all the earth.” In that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one. All shall agree in their view and acknowledgment of the divine character, and, consequently, in all the revealed truths and dictates contained in the Bible. Christ will then come to his temple—his Church,—“and he will be like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. The question will be asked now, as it was then—“But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth?” What sect or denomination of Christians will abide the trial of that day, and be established? Nothing but the truth, or that which is conformable to it, will abide the trial of that day. “The lip of truth shall be established for ever.” “The righteous nation *which keepeth the truth* shall enter in,” and be established in that day. Those of every denomination will doubtless expect that the doctrines they hold, and their mode of worship, and discipline, and practice with respect to the institutions and ordinances of Christ, will

be then established as agreeable to the truth, and all others will be given up; all men will freely conform to them. It is certain that all doctrines and practices which are not agreeable to the truth, will, at that day, as wood, hay, or stubble, be burnt up. Therefore it now highly concerns all honestly to seek and find, love and practise, truth and peace.

It is agreeable to human nature, and seems to be essential to rational creatures, to be most pleased with those who think as they do, and are of the same sentiments with themselves in those things in which they feel themselves chiefly interested and concerned. And this agreement in sentiments cements and increases their union and friendship. But this is true, in a peculiar sense and degree, in the case before us. There can be no proper cordial religious union among professing Christians, who wholly differ and oppose each other in their opinions respecting the truths and doctrines of the gospel. An agreement in sentiment, and in the knowledge and belief of the truth, is essential to the most happy Christian union and friendship. To him who loves the truth, error in others is disagreeable and hateful, and that in proportion to the degree of his love of the truth, and pleasure in it. Therefore, Christians, love one another *in the truth*, as the apostles and primitive Christians did. "The elder, unto the well beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth." Where there is no agreement and union in sentiment, and belief of the truth, there is no foundation for Christian love and friendship. Love, without any regard to truth, is not Christian love. In this sense, the knowledge and belief of the truth and Christian love cannot be separated. And where there is no knowledge and belief of the truths of the gospel, and agreement in sentiment, there can be no union of heart and true Christian love and friendship. They who talk of Christian union, love, and charity, where there is no agreement in sentiment, respecting the truths and doctrines of the gospel, but a great difference and opposition, and think that doctrinal sentiments are of no importance in Christianity, and that their having no belief of particular doctrines, and no creed, or differing in their religious sentiments ever so much, is no impediment to the greatest union and Christian friendship, seem not to know what real Christian union, love, and friendship is. It is certain they do not love one another *in the truth*, and for the truth's sake, which dwelleth in them, as Christians did in the apostles' days. The Catholicism and love for which they plead, appears to be a *political* love and union, which may, in some measure, unite civil worldly societies; but has nothing of the nature of real Christianity, and that union and love by which the followers of *Christ* are *one*. As light and knowledge will be greatly increased in the Millenium, and the great truths and doctrines contained in divine revelation will then be more clearly discerned, and appear in their true connection, excellence, and importance, they will be understood and cordially embraced by all; and they will be united together in the same mind and the same judgment; and by this be formed to a high degree of happy Christian union, love, and friendship, loving one another in the truth, with a pure heart fervently. Thus were the primitive Christians united in knowing and obeying

the truth, whom the Apostle Peter thus addresses:—"Seeing ye have purified your souls in *obeying the truth* through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." In that day the promise and prophecy spoken by Jeremiah will be accomplished, to a greater extent and degree than it ever was before, "And I will give them one heart and *one way*, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them."—*Hopkins on the Millennium.*

DR LIVINGSTON'S JOURNEY ACROSS SOUTH AFRICA.

It has been known for a considerable time that there are extensive regions in Africa, south of the Equator, characterised by great fertility, and pretty densely peopled; but the disastrous results of attempting to reach them by the mouths of the Niger seemed to indicate that these regions, with their inhabitants, were cut off from intercourse with Europeans, by the insalubrious character of the climate. The discoveries which Dr Livingston has made, in his very interesting and successful journey, demonstrate that the fears as to this which had been entertained are groundless. It appears that there is access to these regions by comparatively healthful routes, both from the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean, and that the character of the tribes inhabiting this part of Africa is such that there is high encouragement to adopt speedy and energetic measures for entering on this as a wide and promising field of missionary enterprise, and also for trade. But we will leave Dr Livingston himself, who feels such a lively interest in the spiritual and temporal welfare of the African tribes, to exhibit the results of his experience and observation, and the hopes which these are calculated to inspire, in his own words—as given in extracts from his journal and letters in the *Evangelical Magazine* for September, with the introductory remarks of that periodical.

"After a season of painful and protracted suspense, we have at length the gratification to announce the safe arrival of Dr Livingston at Tette, on the river Zambesi, within about 300 miles distance of Quillimane, his proposed destination on the east coast of Africa. This heroic and indefatigable missionary traveller left St Paul de Loanda, on the west coast, towards the close of 1854, and entered with characteristic ardour upon an undertaking more perilous and formidable than any of his previous journeys—that of penetrating an unexplored country occupied by barbarous tribes, and of reaching the east coast at the distance of more than 2000 miles from his starting point. Proceeding from Cassango, in the province of Angola—the first important stage in his journey—early in 1855, Dr Livingston arrived at Naliele, lat. 15 deg. 24 min. south, long. 23 deg. 6 min. east, in August of the same year; at Linyanti, on the river Chobe, in the October following; and at Tette, the last stage of the journey previous to reaching Quillimane, in the beginning of March of the present year. Having already surmounted the main obstacles to his reaching the east coast, our enterprising brother has, in fact, succeeded in solving a great geographical problem, and thus secured for himself a distinguished place in the esteem and gratitude of the scientific world. But, as Dr Livingston well observes, 'The end of the geographical feat is but the beginning of the missionary enterprise;' and no one is better able and disposed than himself to regard this signal achievement as deriving its chief value from the cheering hope that, in the providence of God, it may eventually open the way for introducing the arts of civilization and the blessings of

Christianity into the heart of that great continent, which for so many ages has been consigned to unmitigated barbarism."

Writing to the Rev. Dr Tidman, dated Linyanti, on the river Chobe, October 12, 1855, Dr Livingston says:—

"As I now possess considerable knowledge of the region to which I have devoted some years of toil, I will employ my present comparative leisure in penning a sort of report, which may enable you to form a clear idea of inter-tropical Africa as a missionary field.

"PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE COUNTRY.

"It may be advantageous to take a glance at the physical features of the country first, in order to be able to appreciate the nature of the obstacles which will have to be surmounted by those whom God may honour to introduce Christianity into this large section of the heathen world. The remarks made for this purpose must be understood as applying exclusively to the country between 18 deg. and 10 deg. south latitude, and situated towards the centre of the continent. The region thus indicated may be described as an extensive plain, intersected in every direction by large rivers, with their departing and re-entering branches. They bear on their bosoms volumes of water, such as are totally unknown in the south, and never dry up, as the Orange and most other African rivers do. They appear as possessing two beds, one of inundation, and another cut out exactly like the Clyde above Bothwell Bridge. They overflow annually during the rainy season in the north, and then the beds of inundation,—the haughs or holms,—are all flooded, though, as in the Barotse valley, they may be more than twenty miles broad. The main body of water flows in the now very deep low-water bed, but the rivers look more like chains of lakes than streams. The country between this and Shesheke was during the present year nearly all under water. The parts which remained dry are only a few feet above the general level, and canoes went regularly from Linyanti to Shesheke, the distance being in a straight line more than 120 miles. It was an unusually wet year, and the plains are not yet free from large patches of stagnant foul-smelling water, though we expect the rains of another season to begin during the present month. The inundation, if I may judge from my own observation, is by no means partial. The exceptions are, where overtopping rocks form high banks, and there we have rapids and cataracts, which impede navigation, and have probably always been the barriers to inland trade. When the supply of water from the north diminishes, the rivers are confined by the low-water channels, and, even at their lowest, are deep enough to prevent invasion by enemies who cannot swim or manage canoes. Numerous lakes of considerable size are left on the lately flooded meadows by the retiring rivers, and these are either fringed with reeds or covered with mat rushes, papyrus plants, the Egyptian arum, the lotus, and other water-loving plants. They are always drying up, but never dry ere the next wet season begins.

"The country over which the rivers never rise is rarely 200 feet higher than the holms; more frequently it is under 100 feet. In many parts there are plains so level, that the rain water stands for months together six or eight inches deep. We waded across some upwards of 20 miles broad; and fish, otters, and water-tortoises appeared in numbers, and quite at home among the grass, bushes, and trees. These peculiarities result, in a great measure, from the form of that part of the continent to which our attention is directed. It appears to be of a basin or trough form; the hollow is much more elevated certainly than the sea, but it is considerably depressed in reference to two sides. I was led to the recognition of this fact by contemplating the Lotembua running in two, and nearly opposite, directions. Parting at the lake Dilolo, the northern portion is discharged into the Casai, and thence into the Atlantic by the Congo. The southern half disembouges into the Leba, and thence into the Indian Ocean by the Zambezi. The boiling point of water showed that this takes place at the highest part of the basin. It is a sort of partition in it, and both north and south of it all the feeders of the great draining rivers flow from both eastern and western ridges towards the centre of the continent. The general direction of ranges of hills, and the stratification of the rocks dipping down towards a central basin, now much filled up by eruptive rocks, I had noticed many years ago; and information received from Arabs of two large shallow lakes within the eastern ridge makes me wonder I did not recognise what seems so self-evident now. I advance this view to you now with the less diffidence, inasmuch as I have just ascertained, by the perusal of a speech of

Sir R. Murchison, before the Royal Geographical Society, that he promulgated the same idea so long ago as 1852. I cannot imagine how he received the information ; but, from his eminent scientific attainments, it is certain to be from a reliable source, and as I reached the conclusion from independent but very jog-trot observation, the view of that gentleman is surely correct."

THE CLIMATE.

Speaking of the climate, Dr Livingston states that its great humidity renders it "far from salubrious for any portion of the human family," and says that fever cuts off great numbers of the natives:—"The fever is certainly the terror of this field. But it must ever be borne in mind that it is the only one. There are few other diseases. No consumption, nor scrofula, nor madness. Measles and small-pox paid a passing visit some twenty years ago. I have seen but one well-marked case of hydrocephalus, three of epilepsy, but none of cholera, cancer, or hydrophobia, or delirium tremens, and many other diseases common in England. The most common diseases are inflammation of different organs ; but neither these nor fever should form a barrier to missionary enterprise. No decidedly unfavourable inference should be drawn from my personal experience in respect of fever. It is true I suffered severe attacks of the disease no fewer than twenty-seven times in the space of two-and-a-half years ; but this cannot be thought surprising, when it is remembered that I slept, month after month, with only a little grass and a horse-cloth between me and the ground, emitting so much moisture,—that I was exposed, in comparative inaction, to the hot sun by day, in a temperature generally upwards of 90 deg. in the shade (for my poor ox would never allow me to hold an umbrella)—that I was drenched with showers, often making me deposit my watch in the arm-pit—the lower extremities wetted regularly two or three times every day by crossing marshy streams—and having food in the half journey north and half passage south purely native. No ulcer was actually formed ; but this I attributed to being occasionally able to procure a fowl and some maize. These constitute rather a pitiful hygiene, and few who follow will have to endure the like. These privations, I beg you to observe, are not mentioned as if I considered them in the light of sacrifices—I think the word ought never to be mentioned in reference to anything we can do for Him who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor. But I supposed you could not well estimate my experience at its true value unless I stated the drawbacks to fair treatment of the animal economy with which I came into collision. No unfavourable opinion surely can be formed from my experience as to what the experience of one less exposed to the vicissitudes of the weather and change of diet might be."

"Abundant warning is always given to seek cure by change of climate ; and we have not far to go, for a few degrees of southing introduce into the dry pure air of the desert, and every step in that direction is made in the very remarkably healthy tract termed the interior of Southern Africa. I have had the complaint in its severest forms, and, when checked by exposure during its course, vomiting of large quantities of blood ensued ; yet I am aware of no organic affection as the result. Indeed, I am as well now as ever I was in my life. The greatest inconvenience I was subjected to was being less energetic, or quite useless, for long periods as a missionary."

"I have found no difficulty in relieving, and ultimately curing, every case submitted to my care. My company of twenty-seven persons were often attacked (two of them being jaundiced, appeared as if affected by something of the West African remittent), but all were brought home in good health. With an equal number of Europeans it might have been otherwise. But I apprehend no great mortality among missionaries—men of education and prudence, who can, if they will, adopt proper hygienic preparations."

"THE INHABITANTS : THEIR NUMBERS, CHARACTER, AND ACCESSIBILITY TO CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE.

"In regard to the people inhabiting this large and populous territory, it is difficult, in the absence of all numerical data, to present a very precise idea. The tribes are large, but divided into a great number of villages. So thickly were these dotted over the country, that in travelling in a straight line, in which we could rarely see more than a mile on each side, we often passed ten or twelve hamlets in a single day. Occasionally, however, we marched ten miles without seeing any. In no part

of the south I have visited is such a population seen. Angola contains 600,000 souls, and Londa seemed more populous, and of larger extent than it. The Cape Colony, with 200,000 souls, possesses some hundreds of missionaries, and other Christian instructors and schoolmasters, but it will bear no comparison with Londa as a missionary field. The Makololo territory has several tribes—Batoke, Batotse, Bahunba, Banyeti, Matlotlora, &c., and there is no impediment to immediate occupation by missionaries; and to such as aspire to the honour of being messengers of mercy to the actual heathen, there is no more inviting field in South Africa. I am not to be understood as meaning that any of these people are anxious for the gospel. They are quite unlike the intelligent inquiring race in the Punjaub, or the vivacious islanders of the Pacific. But there is not such callous indifference to religious truth as I have seen elsewhere, nor yet that opposition which betokens progress in knowledge. But there is a large population, and we are quite sure, if the Word of Life is faithfully preached, in process of time many will believe. I repeat again, that I know of no impediment to immediate efforts for their instruction. Every head man and chief in the country would be proud of the visit or residence of a white man. There is security generally for life and property. I left, by mistake, a pontoon in a village of Londa, and found it safe eighteen months afterwards. Some parcels sent by Mr Moffat, by means of Matebele, lay a whole year on an island in the Zambesi, near Mosioatunya. It is true it was believed that they contained medicine which might bewitch, but regular rogues are seldom scared by such preservatives. The Balonda are a friendly, industrious race, and thousands of the Balobale find an asylum among them from the slave-dealing propensities of their chiefs. They seem to possess a more vivid conviction of their relation to the unseen world than any of the southern tribes. In the deep, dark forests near their villages we always met with idols and places of prayer. The latter are spots about four feet broad and forty long, kept carefully clear of vegetation and falling leaves. Here, in the still darkness of the forest night, the worshipper, either male or female, comes alone and prays to the gods (Barimo) or spirits of departed relatives; and, when an answer to the petition seems granted, meal or other food is sprinkled on the spot as a thank-offering.

"The Balonda extend to 7 deg. south lat., and their paramount chief is always named Matiamvo. There are many subordinate chiefs, all nearly independent. The Balobale possess the same character, but are more warlike; yet no prudent white man would be in the least danger among them.

"It seems proper to refer to the Chibouque, Bashinje, and Bangaula, who treated us more scurvily than any I had previously met with in Africa. Sometimes they levelled their guns at us, and seemed as if we must fight to prevent entire plunder and reduction to slavery. But I thank God we did them no harm, and no one need fear vengeance on our account. A few more visits on the same principle would render them as safe as all other tribes, concerning which it may be confidently stated, that if one behaves as a Christian and a gentleman, he will invariably be treated as such. Contrary conduct will give rise to remarks and treatment of scorn."

"OPENINGS FOR TRADE AND FOR THE ULTIMATE SPREAD OF CIVILIZATION AND CHRISTIANITY.

"The Africans are all deeply imbued with the spirit of trade. We found great difficulty in getting past many villages; every artifice was employed to detain us, that we might purchase our suppers from them. And, having finished all the game, they are entirely dependant on English calico for clothing. It is retailed to them by inches; a small piece will purchase a slave. If they had the opportunity of a market, they could raise on their rich soil abundance of cotton, and zingoba beans for oil. I cannot say they were lazy, though they did seem to take the world easy. Their hair was elaborately curled; many of their villages were models of neatness, and so were their gardens and huts. Many were inveterate musicians. The men who went with me to Londa did so in order to open up a path for commerce, and without any hope of payment from me. Though compelled to part with their hard-won earnings in that city for food, on our way home I never heard a murmur. The report they gave of the expedition, both in public and in private, and very kind expressions towards myself, were sufficiently flattering. A fresh party was despatched with ivory, under the guidance of an Arab from Zanzibar, and two days only given

for preparation ; and when they return, or even sooner, my companions are to start again. That their private opinions are in accordance with their public professions, I have evidence in the number of volunteers who offer themselves to the East with me, knowing I have not wherewith to purchase food even. And they are not an enthusiastic race either ; there is not the least probability of any mere adventurer attaining much influence among them. If the movement now begun is not checked by some untoward event, the slave trade will certainly come to a natural termination in this quarter, our cruisers have rendered slaves of so little value now on the coast. Commerce has the effect of speedily letting the tribes see their mutual dependence. It breaks up the sullen isolation of heathenism. It is so far good. But Christianity alone reaches the very centre of the wants of Africa and of the world. Theoretically, I would pronounce the country about the fords of the Leeba and Leeambye, or Kabompo, and the river of the Bashukolompo, as a most desirable central point for the spread of civilization and Christianity. And, unfortunately, I must mar my report by saying I feel a difficulty as to taking my children there without their own intelligent self-dedication. I can speak for my wife and myself only ; we will go, whoever remains behind."

In a later letter to Dr Tidman, dated March 2, 1856, from Tetia, on the river Zambesi, this enterprising traveller says,—“It will be gratifying for you to hear that I have been able to follow up, without swerving, my original plan of opening a way to the sea, both on the east and west coast, from a healthy locality to the interior of the continent. Not until two months ago was I aware of the existence of any salubrious point, though I now recollect a reference made thereto by Sebituane. But now I can announce not only a shorter path for our use, but a decidedly healthy locality. By this fine river, flowing through a fertile country, we have water conveyance to within one or two degrees of the Makololo,—the only impediments I know of being one or two rapids (not cataracts), and the people in some parts being robbers. The kind interest which many of my countrymen have shown in my work makes me feel deeply grateful, and somewhat ashamed withal, at having done so little to deserve it. . . . I am not so elated in having performed, what has not to my knowledge been done before, in traversing the continent, because the end of the geographical feat is but the beginning of the missionary enterprise. May God grant me life to do some more good to this poor Africa !”

Selected Poetry.

THOUGHTS OF HEAVEN.

No sickness there,
 No weary wasting of the frame away ;
 No fearful shrinking from the midnight air,
 No dread of summer's bright and fervid ray ;

No hidden grief,
 No wind and cheerless vision of despair,
 No vain petition for a swift relief,
 No tearful eye, no broken hearts are there.

Care has no home
 Within that realm of ceaseless praise and song :
 Its tossing billows break and melt in foam,
 Far from the mansions of the spirit-throng.

The storm's black wing
 Is never spread athwart celestial skies ;
 Its wailing blends not with the voice of Spring,
 As some too tender flow'ret fades and dies.

No night distils
 Its chilling dews upon the tender frame ;
 No moon is needed there : the light which fills
 That land of glory from its Maker came.

No parted friends
 O'er mournful recollections have to weep ;
 No bed of death enduring Love attends,
 To watch the coming of a pulseless sleep.

No blasted flower
 Or withered bud celestial gardens know !
 No scorching blast, or fierce descending shower,
 Scatters destruction like a ruthless foe !

No battle-word
 Startles the sacred host with fear and dread.
 The song of peace, Creation's morning heard,
 Is sung wherever angel minstrels tread !

Let us depart,
 If home like this await the weary soul :
 Look up, thou stricken one ; thy wounded heart
 Shall bleed no more at sorrow's stern control.

With Faith, our guide,
 White-robed and innocent, to trace the way,
 Why fear to plunge in Jordan's rolling tide,
 And find the ocean of eternal day ?

Westminster Herald.

THE OCEAN.

Majestic, wide, unfathomable sea,
 Thou mighty waste of waters ! How I love
 To gaze upon thee. Like a well-known friend
 Thou art unto my soul, upon whose face
 I love to gaze, and trace each lineament.
 Thy booming wave is music to my ear,
 And causes secret awe within my soul.
 Silent I stand upon thy furrowed sand,
 Far distant from the busy haunts of men,
 Alone with God and with the ocean. No sound heard
 Save its loud boom, and still, at intervals,
 The plover's wild monotonous complaint
 Among the neighbouring hills. Musing I stand,
 Pensive and happy, scarcely knowing why,
 Watching each wave which breaks against the shore
 In scattering foam ; listening to every sound
 Faintly re-echoed by the distant hills,
 While thoughts unutterable rush through my soul
 In quick succession—I think of God,
 And of eternity, stupendous themes—
 Can the poor infidel stand by thy side,
 Oh, mighty Ocean ! and, with outstretched hand,
 Look up into the clear serenity of Heaven,
 Then look upon thy broad expanse, Oh, deep !
 And say, in impious daring of high Heaven,
 "There is no God."

GEORGE AUCHTERLONIE.

THE PRAYER-MEETING.

As God has not ordained that men should live without food, so it is not his will that, in ordinary cases, they should be furnished with this except in the use of means to which activity and diligence, on their part, are required. There is no creature that is not found active in some way in the use of means for this end. In like manner, God has ordained that spiritual prosperity should not be enjoyed by men except in the diligent use of appropriate and appointed means for sustaining and promoting the life and health of the soul; and of these means prayer is an essential element. To expect to enjoy Christian prosperity without prayer, is to look for this in a way that is at variance with the purpose and appointment of God. There is scarcely any more certain sign of the decay of true religion in a soul, or among a people, than the neglect of prayer, or indisposition to engage in this duty. Nothing, we think, is more certain than that the Spirit teaches all to pray in whom he savingly dwells. He is promised as the Spirit of grace and supplications; and the apostle assures Christians that, because they are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, *Abba, Father.* (Gal. iv. 6.) Nor is it less really the will of God that his people should engage in the duty of prayer in company than in secret. To the one he has set the seal of his approbation as well as the other. We have no doubt that the best part of our readers will thank us for furnishing them, from an American paper, with the following appropriate statements on this subject, as the lessons taught in these words of the inspired historian—Acts xii. 12—"And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying":—

"We may learn several useful lessons from these words, which you and I, kind reader, would do well to ponder and practice.

1. The social prayer-meeting is no novelty. Such meetings are at least distinguished for their antiquity, for they were held in the time of Christ and his apostles, which argues much in their favour and beneficial influence: see Luke ix. 29-36. You cannot, therefore, object to such meetings on the ground of novelty and innovation.

2. The primitive Christians, it seems, found no great difficulty, in the worst times, to obtain a suitable place to hold the prayer-meeting. The writer of the Acts tells us that their meeting was held 'in the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark.' She was no doubt a true disciple of Jesus. The Lord had graciously opened her heart, by his Word and Spirit, like that of Lydia, and thus inclined her to open her house readily and cheerfully, for the accommodation of the praying society. It is a great mistake to think that we cannot worship the Lord acceptably unless it be in some splendid temple, cathedral, &c. It is not the *place* of worship, but the *character* of the worshipper which determines the result: see John iv. 20-24. An unbelieving, impenitent sinner would be rejected, though he should worship God in a palace of gold, while the believing, broken-hearted Christian, whose only hope of acceptance with God is in the atonement of Jesus, would be accepted, though he should worship the Lord in a cave. The Lord seeth not as man seeth: 'For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.'—Isa. lvii. 15. The spirit of Christianity is not opposed to the outward convenience, comfort, &c., of mankind; we should never be willing to use a barn, or hovel, or school-house as a fit place for

the worship of our Maker, when we are abundantly able to erect and furnish a good and substantial building for that purpose (see Hag. i. 4). But it is certainly opposed to pride and pomp and worldly splendour. Such things do not tend to nourish *non-conformity* to the world (Rom. xii. 2), and are in direct contrast with the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus. The apostle's rule is here:—'Let all things be done decently and in order.'—1 Cor. xiv. 40; Phil. iv. 8. Such decency, convenience, and order, were doubtless found in Mary's house, which, like that of Obed-edom, the Lord blessed for the ark's sake.

3. It appears that the prayer-meeting, which was held in Mary's house, was attended by the *members* of the church; for we read (v. 5), that prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for Peter. Now, comparing this with the statement in the twelfth verse, we may reasonably conclude that the persons attending this prayer-meeting were nearly, if not all, professing members of the church. And this is no doubt written for our example, and shows us the great importance and necessity for church members now to countenance and support these meetings by their presence. And, indeed, if they are not upheld by the members, who will do it? Can you for a moment suppose the world will think well of religion, or be apt to attend any Christian ordinance, or part of divine worship, which you manifestly disregard? 'If ye love me,' says Christ, 'keep my commandments.' 'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' Let the world be able to take knowledge, from your Christian conduct with respect to the prayer-meeting, that you have been with Jesus.

4. Another pleasing feature seen in this prayer-meeting is the fact, that it was *well attended*. In that house of Mary, which was doubtless well known to all the praying people around, there were *many gathered together*. It is true, we should never think more highly of a religious duty merely because it is observed by a multitude, or value it less because it is unpopular; for

'Numbers are no mark,
That men will right be found;
A few were saved in Noah's ark
For many millions drown'd.'

Much less should the friends of Christ cease to hold their social prayer-meeting because it is unpopular, since the Saviour has said, 'That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where *two or three* are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.'—Matt. xviii. 19, 20. But how it encourages the pastor to see not only the sanctuary crowded on the Sabbath with devout worshippers, but to see them anxious to attend the prayer-meetings; and so leaving the 'watering-pots' of this world, like the woman of Samaria, hastening to the place where prayer is wont to be made, as clouds and as doves to their windows!

5. These persons were great lovers of the prayer-meeting. This is evident from the time when, and the circumstances under which, they met. It was in the night season, for fear of their persecutors, who sought their life. But so strong was their love to Jesus, and so good did they find it to mingle their prayers and praises together at a throne of grace, that these things were no hindrance to their meeting. How lamentably defective do the love and zeal of our modern church members appear when contrasted with this! A cold, or rain, or distance, or the occurrence of a social party or gathering in the neighbourhood, where the evening is spent in worldly conversation and amusement, is enough to keep them from the prayer-meeting! Alas! where is, I will not say their *first love*, but where is their Christian consistency as the professed friends of Jesus? That is a solemn question, 'Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not those things which I say?'

6. These persons had an *object* in view when they assembled, for they were gathered together for the purpose of 'praying.' It was while thus engaged that Peter came to them. And they *all* prayed, if not by turn, yet in heart while joining in the devotions conducted by their brethren. Never forget, kind reader, the *object* for which you assemble. If you go to the public sanctuary on the Sabbath, let it be your object to worship God with your whole heart: 'Keep, therefore, thy feet when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools.'—Eccl. v. 1. If you go to the Lord's table, let it be your object

and prayer to meet your Saviour, who brings his people 'into his banqueting-house, where his banner over them is love.' And if you go to the prayer-meeting, let your motive not be custom, formality, or the pacifying of conscience, but a hearty desire to unite in prayer and praise to God.

And for what did they pray? The deliverance of Peter, who had been cast into prison by Herod, and who was now under sentence of death. He was, moreover, so well guarded by chains and soldiers that no human power could deliver him. But they knew what was impossible with men is possible with God. Like others, therefore, in like extremity, they looked to him for help, and wrestled, like Jacob, till they prevailed. God heard their prayers, and, to assure them of this, he directed Peter to go to the very place where they were praying for him. Truly, God's promises do not fail. 'Ask and it shall be given you;' 'While they are yet speaking I will hear;' 'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.'—Matt. vii. 7; Isa. lxxv. 25; James v. 16.

Reader, never forget to attend the prayer-meeting. If but two should assemble, resolve that you will be one of them; for the Saviour declares, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.'—AMICUS VERITATIS.—*Presbyterian*.

MY SABBATHS.

THERE are few things which we would more rejoice to see extensively diffused in professed religious communities than such sentiments, concerning Sabbath sanctification, as are contained in a short paper in the *Westminster Herald*, to which the title above is prefixed. It is as follows:—

"I must be more particular in many things, if I am to enjoy the advantages for which the Sabbath was intended.

"1. I must not forget that there are as many hours in a Sabbath-day as in any other day. This thing of sleeping an hour longer on Sabbath-day than any other day is robbing God and robbing myself. I must begin the day at the right time as well as in the right way.

"2. I must be punctual in attending upon the worship of the sanctuary. It is not only a day of rest, but of devotion. And when in the sanctuary, I must try to be a true worshipper.

"3. I must pray for a blessing upon the Sabbath and its privileges. I must ask that my own heart may be prepared for its duties. I must pray that the blessing of heaven may rest on my pastor, and that, in the public assembly, God's grace may descend as the dew upon the hearts of those who meet for his worship.

"4. I must more entirely dismiss secular things, worldly thoughts, conversation, and employments. Politics and business must, with the plough and the axe, rest until the Sabbath is gone. I have sadly failed here, especially in my thoughts and conversation.

"5. I must try to remember that the Sabbath is an earnest of the rest remaining for the people of God; that every one as it comes may be the last, and should be spent as if to be succeeded by the eternal Sabbath in heaven.

"6. I must not forget that the Sabbath, well spent, secures a blessing on the other means of grace. It greatly increases the spirit of prayer—it is sure to secure the profitable reading of the Scriptures—it makes us realize the sweetness and profit of the fellowship of the saints—it makes us joyful in God's house.

"7. I must carefully review my failures in regard to the Sabbath, and repent, mourning over my sins, and turning from them."

The manner in which the Sabbath is kept by individuals, or a people, is one of the best tests of their religious condition. God gave his Sabbaths to Israel to be a sign between him and them, and they are still an unequivocal sign of the actual state of heart among a people towards God, and of the measure in which he dwells in them by his Spirit. It

is impossible to have sufficient regard to the will of God, in the respect which he requires us to show to his Sabbaths, as sacred time set apart by him for spiritual work. The Lord our God is jealous, and, as he looketh on the heart, there is the most urgent call, if we would indeed walk with God, to keep the strictest watch over our thoughts, our eyes, and our ears, as well as our words and actions, on this holy day. If those who are most watchful against sin on the Sabbath greatly fail, how must it be with others? Here the words may be applied—"If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and ungodly appear," who are living in open rebellion against this part of the law of God every returning Sabbath, in multiplied sins of omission on the one hand, and of commission on the other?

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE DEMORALISING AND DEGRADING INFLUENCE OF POPERY.

As true religion appears in its highest glory when it becomes national—when its blissful influence is seen stamped on the character, institutions, and practice of a whole people,—so the baleful influence of Popery is impressively illustrated when a whole people are seen yielding themselves up with infatuation to its sway, and become so maddened with its intoxicating draughts as to indulge in practices in which reason and humanity are outraged in a degree to which even the annals of heathenism furnish no parallel.

It is affecting that the kingdom of France, with its boasted enlightenment and civilization, could be the scene of such fooleries, on the one hand, and cruelties, combined with daring Sabbath desecration, on the other, as are described in the two following extracts.

Is it possible, we may ask, that it is by the people of France that such absurdities are witnessed and practised, with the highest applause, as are recorded in a late number of *Evangelical Christendom*:—

"I have before me the accounts of the coronation of two statues of the Virgin Mary. One of these *fetes* took place at Puy-de-Dôme, in the ancient province of Auvergne. The other at Verdolais, near Bordeaux. On reading the strange details of those ceremonies, it is impossible to exclude a sentiment of sorrowful compassion. In truth, Paganism did not celebrate its ceremonies with a pomp more worldly; and the image of the great Diana of Ephesus was treated and crowned with the same observances as that of the Virgin Mary.

"At Puy-de-Dôme, four bishops were present. Triumphant arches had been dressed out on the whole route. Banners and oriflammes floated in the air. The crown of gold, enriched with precious stones, was carried by priests on a velvet cushion. The statue of the Virgin, surrounded by eight torches, rested on a throne of three stories, and was enveloped with gauze of gold. Public functionaries of every rank, magistrates, professors of colleges, officers, and soldiers, and more than 80,000 spectators formed the triumphal retinue. Drums and cannons sounded—mass was celebrated. A Jesuit having mounted on a platform constructed in the open air, recounted the miracles wrought by the Queen of Heaven. Then one of the bishops placed the precious crown on the head of the Madonna, amidst the ringing of bells, the sound

of artillery, and of instruments of music; and while incense was offered to the statue by the priests, the whole multitude fell on their knees, chanting the praises of 'the mother of God.' In the evening there were grand illuminations and fireworks, and fires were lighted on the tops of the mountains of Auvergne.

"The same rites at Verdélais. Cardinal Donnot, Archbishop of Bordeaux, assisted at the *fete*, with eight other prelates. The people shouted, while marching behind the image, 'Vive Marie! long live our Lady of Verdélais! long live our Queen!' and immense plaudits saluted, from time to time, the august Madonna. 'When the Virgin was decked with her new crown,' says the Curé of Quayrac, from whom I borrow this recital, 'she was carried in triumph around the market-place, with the sound of trumpets, and repeated discharges of cannon. Then, by a spontaneous and filial movement, the ecclesiastics who composed her train threw themselves at the feet of the holy Virgin. Some kissed the hem of her garment; others touched her feet, or placed objects of devotion on the face of her statue, that they might be sanctified by this pious contact.'

"What a religion! The Feticchism of the negroes presents similar scenes; and how should the poor Romanists of Pay-de-Dôme and Verdélais not concentrate their adoration on the Virgin Mary, when the highest dignitaries of their communion set the example of that unworthy idolatry?"

How painful is it, again, to find that France has been lately the scene of such revolting cruelties, as a source of entertainment, and that the holy Sabbath has been the day chosen for their exhibition to congregated thousands of the *élite* of French society, under the patronage of the Emperor and Empress, of which there is a sketch given in the following extract. Are we indeed compelled to believe that the bull-fights of Spain, that have long furnished demonstration of the degraded and vitiated taste of that nation, the morals of which are so corrupted, are now to be transferred to France, and to become a staple part of the amusements of that mighty people? Had we no other proof that judgments of a fearful character are yet awaiting that nation than is furnished in the preceding extract, along with that which we subjoin, we could have no doubt that they would, sooner or later, come. But they are only flagrant specimens of what indicates that the cup of that nation's iniquity is filling up. Are Sir Benjamin Hall and his coadjutors prepared to have the multitudes of the Metropolis, that assemble in the Parks, entertained with an exhibition on the Lord's day, corresponding to that at Bayonne, described in the following paragraph extracted from the *Witness* :—

"The Emperor and Empress witnessed a bull-fight at Bayonne on Sunday last. 'The first bull crept out, as it were, stealthily, and, when least expected, made a rush at Aguirre, the *torero* of the blue cloak, who, by a slight but skilful movement, evaded the dangerous horns, but yet remained still, and allowed the disappointed animal to rush blindly on until he perceived that his enemy had disappeared. A crowd of *chulos* then began to distract his attention. They roused him to fury by shaking their cloaks in his face, and the *espada* Egana, profiting by the favourable opportunity, for which he had remained quietly on the watch, advanced under his very horns, and executed an admirable *suerte a la Navarra*. *Bandarillas*, or darts, were planted in the animal's neck with much dexterity by Aguirre and Condoya; and, in less than half an hour, Egana killed his beast at one stroke, without causing him to shed a drop of blood. The second bull, on his first rush from the den, went bounding round the ring in great fury, and leaped the barriers; but he soon got tired, and showed no great desire to fight. Egana planted in his neck a couple of

darts with gunpowder at the points, and the heated weapons soon produced their effect; his apathy disappeared, and he was quickly roused to fury. He pawed the earth, and made desperate but useless efforts to fling off his torturing appendages. *Hæret lethalis arundo.* In a few minutes, two French bull-fighters and two Spaniards were sprawling on the ground. A fresh pair of fire *banderillas* were planted by Baques, and a third by Condoya. When the moment for despatching him came, he was killed by Egana at the second blow; and the public were so pleased that the carcass was given to him as a perquisite.* Three more bulls were killed. The Emperor and Empress remained to the last. They were applauded on retiring, and the Spanish national air was again played when they took their departure."

IS THE PAPACY A CHURCH IN THE BIBLE SENSE?*

It may seem strange that, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, such a question should be raised, and still more so, that, among Protestant divines, diverse answers should be given to this plain but fundamental interrogation. That such is the case, appears from a discussion in the Free Church Presbytery of Edinburgh some time ago, and also from the diversity of sentiment expressed in the recent meeting of the Irish Presbyterian Assembly, and that by some of the most distinguished members. The occasion of this expression of sentiment was the introduction of an overture by Dr Barnet, to the effect, "that, inasmuch as the Assembly believed the Church of Rome to be an apostacy, and the Pope of Rome the Antichrist, the Man of Sin, and Son of Perdition, whose coming had been foretold, the Assembly do declare that the priests of Rome were not ministers of Christ, and that no ordinances which they administered could be recognised by the Presbyterian Church." The proposer of the overture is reported to have said, "I am perfectly aware that the subject of the overture is one which demands deep attention, and that there exists considerable diversity of opinion respecting it. I shall, therefore, be perfectly satisfied if you will allow it to remain upon the books for a year, and let it be brought forward next year, and discussed in the spirit of brotherly kindness and charity." This was, indeed, a very modest request, and one that we might suppose would have been unanimously granted, unless upon the part of those members who might feel amazed that there should be any hesitation in regard to its immediate adoption. But very different was the reception which it met with on the part of Dr Cooke, in whose reply it seemed that the Assembly silently acquiesced, as there is no reported opposition to his startling sentiments, regarding the position of the Romish priests. He is reported to have said, "Nothing would give me more delight, if I could do it with consistency, than to comply with any request of Dr Barnet; but, in reality, I cannot, with consistency, consent to its remaining on the books. I will tell you why: because either the whole Protestant Church has been wrong since the Reformation, and we have been wrong up to this time, or Dr Barnet is wrong now. (Hear, hear.) There is no record that Luther was re-baptized, nor Melancthon, Zuinglius, Calvin, Knox, Cranmer, Ridley, nor Latimer. I have as low an opinion of Popery as any man

* This able paper is inserted as a part of the argument on one side of an open question, which demands the consideration of all Protestants.

here; but I will not affirm the proposition that a priest of Rome is not a priest of Christ. I will not dare to affirm that the high priest of Jerusalem was not a priest of Jehovah, any more than I would say that a rebel subject is not a subject of Queen Victoria. I think the priests of Rome are heretical priests. I think them fallen, and falling; but that will not induce me to say that they are not of the priesthood of Christ, more than say that the people at Balingarry were not subjects of Victoria because they were rebels. I would call that most respectable man,—whom I am happy to find has come back to Dublin, for he is a fine fellow, with all his faults—(applause)—that man who made the attack upon Widow Malone's house, if it was Malone they called her,—a subject of Queen Victoria, though he was a rebel for a time. In the same way, I will not say the priests of Rome are not the priests of Christ—I will not, on any account, say that they have not a commission. It is the having of the commission of Christ, and at the same time perverting it, that is the real charge against them."

"The Assembly determined not to discuss the question at present, but to refer the overture to the Committee on Popery, who are to bring it up in whatever form they think fit next year."*

We have inserted the speech in full, as reported in the *Guardian*, not only from a desire to do Dr Cooke the amplest justice, but from the conviction that it is one of the most remarkable speeches made by any Protestant, much less Presbyterian divine, since the Reformation. For the talents and public standing of the Doctor, and for his opinion on many questions—especially the testimony which he has borne against the Arian heresy—we have the profoundest respect. But, when he enunciates principles which we deem directly opposed to the representations given of Popery in the Bible, and to the fundamental relations in which the Protestant and Presbyterian Churches stand to the Papacy, no respect for personal or public character can constrain to silence.

In regard to the overture itself, there are two points which we think might be improved. Instead of designating the apostacy as the "Church of Rome," we would simply call it the Papacy, a term which is perfectly legitimate, and to which even a Romanist cannot object, considering the relation in which the Pope stands to the entire system. Much has been lost by Protestantism, and gained by Popery, in consequence of admitting its claim to a place among the churches. The title "Church of Rome" is especially objectionable because of its association, in the minds of Christians, with that primitive church to which the apostle addressed one of his epistles—an epistle which strikes at the very root of the Papacy, by expounding and defending the doctrine of justification by faith. Wherever there is implanted in the mind the idea of a church, there is felt in association something sacred—something that melts down opposition, and obliterates the line of demarcation between the Church of Christ and the system of Antichrist. It may be asked, "What is there in a name?" But, constituted as we are, names designate moral relations, and so far influence the entire current of our thoughts and feelings. In the latter part of the overture, we think the language not sufficiently precise, when it

* *Scottish Guardian*, July 15, 1856.

asks, "that no ordinance which they (the priests) administered could be recognised by the Presbyterian Church." We would desiderate the limitation here to ordinances strictly ecclesiastical. We are not called upon to reject the ordinance of marriage, though dispensed by a heathen idolater; nor would we call in question its legality, though administered by the priests of Rome. To do so would involve the idea that all who had been thus united were living in a state of concubinage, and at the same time contradict the practice of the Apostolic Church, which admitted the validity of those marriages which were contracted under the existing forms of heathen administration.

But while we suggest these alterations in the overture, we must, at the same time, give the direct negative to the averments of Dr Cooke against it, as stated in the speech already quoted. We freely admit that we have no account of the re-baptism of any of the Reformers, whose names are quoted by the Doctor. And we also admit that the practice of most of the Protestant Churches has been similar to that of the Reformation Church, in her separation from the Anti-Christian system. But we are not aware that any Reformer then, or since, has employed the language, or embodied the ideas, contained in the above speech, regarding the position of the Romish priesthood. It is not enough, however, to settle such a question by the practice of any man, or the views of the church at any period. To Presbyterians, the Bible is the standard of faith and practice. Reformers and churches are to be followed in as far as their views and practice conform with the revealed Word. Consequently, in opposing such an overture, we would have legitimately expected that an appeal would have been at once made to the Divine standard. We shall do so, after disposing of the leading sentiments in the speech recorded above.

The Doctor tells us that his reason for refusing the overture even a place upon the Assembly's records, is because "he will not affirm the proposition that a priest of Rome is not a priest of Christ," in defence of which he refers to the case of the Jewish High Priest at Jerusalem, as though he stood in the same category with a rebel against Queen Victoria, of whom he would not affirm that he was not a subject because a rebel. There is here a confusion of analogy and a misconception of official relations, in respect to the church, that we could not have expected from the merest tyro in theology or philosophy. The title *priests of Christ* we utterly reject, as such an office holds no place under the New Testament economy. The priesthood, in all that constituted its real official existence, was abolished by the coming of Christ. The priest, under the law, was a person consecrated and ordained of God, not only to teach the people and pray for them, but also to offer up sacrifices for his own sins and those of the people. (Ex. xxviii., Lev. iv. v. vi.) This typical priesthood has been completely abolished by the advent of the Son of God, who "was made an high priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec." To speak, then, of "a priest of Christ" under the New Testament economy, is not only a misapplication of language, but the admission of an office in the Anti-Christian system, which stands in direct antagonism to the priesthood of Christ, and by its existence puts direct dishonour upon

the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice of the Divine Redeemer. Not only has the Papacy usurped the crown, rights, and prerogatives of the King and head in Zion, but, by the erection of a priesthood, has denied the atonement which He offered for sin, as well as the sufficiency and infinite value of that finished righteousness, on the ground of which pardon is dispensed to perishing sinners.

On this ground alone, were there no other, we would be prepared to deny the Doctor's affirmations, and to assert, without dismay, that no priest, of any system now existing, is, or can be, "a priest of Christ." The ancient Jewish priest was consecrated and ordained of God; that is, by divine authority, and in accordance with divinely prescribed ceremonial observances. Will any man be prepared to affirm that the priests of Rome are in any sense ordained of God, or that any of their idolatrous observances are prescribed in the sacred volume, in relation to the gospel ministers of Christ? We trow not. Where, then, is the foundation for the Doctor's newly-imported title, "a priest of Christ?" But let it be further observed, that this point lies at the very foundation of Rome's blasphemous assumptions. The office of priest, even as defined by the Papacy, consists not in ordination or the laying on of hands, but in consecration or setting apart of each priest to *offer sacrifices for the living and the dead*. It is in this that the essential characteristic of the priesthood consists, and it is unnecessary to add that that office, which is directly opposed to the central doctrine of the Christian system—the priesthood and atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ,—cannot be in any sense recognised in the true church.

We are aware that the advocates of the Popish, and even of the Prelatical hierarchy, contend for the office of priest, falsely assuming that Christian ministers are entitled to be regarded as succeeding to the same relation in the church with that which was sustained by the priesthood under the Jewish economy. On this assumption, the plea is, that the duties performed, and the authority exercised, under the direct sanction of the Most High, are now transferred to those who are duly qualified, by a certain order of succession, to discharge the offices of the ministry under the present dispensation. We have already shown that the Christian ministry *is not a priesthood*—that Christ is the only and all-sufficient priest of the New Testament Church; and, did space permit, it could easily be shown that the Levitical terms employed in the Apostolic writings, which do not apply exclusively to Christ, belong equally to all true Christians, and are in no sense to be regarded in their official application.

We have already shown that the essence of the priesthood consists in the presentation of sacrifices for the living and the dead. The priests are, as the original term (*hiereus*) implies, sacrificers. But in no solitary instance are gospel ministers represented as sacrificers, nor is there any provision made for succession to the Levitical priesthood. The office of priest, and the claims upon which it rests, belong alike to that apostacy which is designated by the spirit of inspiration as "the Mystery of Iniquity," and described as "coming with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." Let it not be told in Presbyterian Ulster,

that one of her ablest Doctors of Divinity will even yet speak of the priests of Rome as "*priests of Christ*." To admit the pretensions of Antichrist, that the idolatrous priests of Rome have a commission from the Head of the Church, may well lead Presbyterians to exclaim, "Save me from my friends! and I will wage a successful war with the avowed enemies of the King of Zion."

But the Doctor's mode of argument is as objectionable and as fallacious as his broad assertions. His appeal to the apostacy of the Jewish Church, and the position of her high priest, has no legitimate analogy in the case before us. The reference to the priest of Israel could only hold comparison with the office-bearers of a true Church of Christ in a backsliding condition. Such, for example, as the ministers in the Church of Pergamus and Thyatira—much corrupted, but still recognised as the Churches of Christ, and encouraged to seek reformation. The Roman apostacy occupies no such position as foretold in prophecy, or described in character, or denounced in judgment. The Bible does not once accord to the Roman apostacy the title of "church." It is predicted, under the most expressive epithets, by which its character is at the same time described as "the Beast," "the Whore," "the great Whore"—"the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." It is designated "Babylon the great," as directly opposed to Jerusalem, and "the Mystery of Iniquity," as expressive of its direct antagonism to "the Mystery of Godliness." To these descriptive titles it has fully established an irrefragable right, and, consequently, taking the prediction of the Bible, and the developments of Antichrist, in history we can find no warrant for admitting the apostacy to be in any Bible sense a church, nor the priests of "the man of sin" to be commissioned by Christ. It therefore follows, that a reference to the Jewish high priest is nothing more than an illusion, not very complimentary to the discrimination of the Assembly, nor to the logic of the Doctor who employed such an argument.

The reference to the position of a rebel subject is equally fallacious. Smith O'Brien, and his so-called patriots at Balingarry, were legitimate subjects of Queen Victoria, both before and after their rebellious insurrection, because citizens of Great Britain and Ireland. This act of rebellion did not change their civil or political relations to her Majesty; but that relation would have been completely different had they been enrolled as American citizens, or had they been brought up in the kingdom of Italy. Now, we hold that there is just as little connection between the priests of Rome and the King of Zion as there is between an Italian or American subject and the Sovereign of Britain. The British subject, though a rebel, was still a subject, because standing previously in this social relation to the head of authority in Britain, whereas the priest of Rome never had any official relation to the head of the Church of Christ, but stood personally and officially in willing consecration to Antichrist, and to that kingdom of Satan, which is described as embodied in the Papacy—"the great Babylon,"—"as full of blasphemies"—and as being "drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus." Moreover, Smith O'Brien and his associates could not be called the officers of Queen Victoria, nor could they be said to

have her commission; consequently, the argument from analogy is an utter failure.

We emphatically deny that the priests of Rome are either priests or ministers of Christ—that they have either commission or credentials as such—and affirm that they are simply priests of Antichrist, and, as such, cannot administer any ordinance of the true Church of Christ. Dr Cooke admits that they “are heretical priests.” Is not the entire system from which they have received their official being, the combination—the consummation of all heresy? He speaks of them as “fallen, and falling.” Pray, from what higher moral altitude? Could they possibly fall lower than their author or origin, which is a rebellious confederacy against the rights of God and man? We hold that officially they can neither rise higher while priests, nor fall lower than that system of idolatry which gave them being, and sustains them in priestly existence.

Dr Cooke must hold the doctrine of apostolical succession, otherwise he could not recognise the pretensions of the Romish priesthood to be in any sense the ministers of Christ. On no other grounds, that we can imagine, could he declare, “I will not, on any account, say that the priests of Rome are not the priests of Christ—I will not, on any account, say that they have not a commission. It is the having of that commission, and at the same time perverting it, that is the real charge against them.” Whence, we ask, have they obtained their commission? Has it come from Christ, or from Antichrist? The Doctor holds the former; we hold the latter, and demand proof. According to this idea of their commission from Christ, the priests of Rome stand guilty of the perversion of their office and commission,—thus the guilt is made to rest upon the priests individually, while the system that gave them official being cannot be chargeable if it is really issuing Christ’s commission. It is, however, the system, as a system, that is condemned in the Bible, and not the priests of that system in their individual capacity.

If the Doctor holds by the doctrine of apostolical succession—and this is evidently the ground of reference to the Jewish Church,—we think he might be helped to trace it up to its source, even before Judaism, as such, had an existence. From the family of Adam, into which the true religion from heaven was introduced, as we have evidence in the sacrifice presented by Abel, there sprung two lines of descendants, and two antagonistic systems. The one may be traced in the line of the patriarchs down to Noah; the other in the line of those who filled the earth with violence, and of the Babylonian builders. Again, from the family of Noah we may trace two opposing systems,—the one in the line of Abraham, developed in the history of the Jewish Church; the other in the line of those idolaters from whom he was separated, and which developed itself in the various systems of heathen worship down till the establishment of the Roman Empire. From the Christian era, we see still the opposing systems—“the Mystery of Godliness” and “the Mystery of Iniquity,”—pure Christianity on the one hand, and heathen idolatry, native, or as ingrafted upon Apostolic Christianity, on the other. The importation of idols and idolatrous

rites transformed the Church called Roman, so that she became "a synagogue of Satan" in her visible character, while there was still preserved a witnessing remnant, true in their allegiance to the King of Zion. The succession of the Romish priesthood can have no possible existence in the Church of Christ, which retains not from the ancient economy *sacrificers* for the people, but which fully recognises *one priest* and *one atonement*, even Jesus. Their succession must be derived from, and traced to, the first idolaters of the human family. It cannot be traced even to the priesthood of the Jewish Church; for that priesthood never offered sacrifices for *the dead*, and the sacrifices for the living was strictly symbolical, pointing, as the priest's office did, to the priesthood and atoning sacrifice of the incarnate Son of God.

It is not, then, with the legitimate priests of a divinely revealed religion, supposed to be in a "fallen and falling" state, that we have to do in the question before us. It is with the priests of an organised and defined system, represented as the "Mystery of Iniquity" in the sacred volume. It is not with the ordinances of a "falling," or even a "fallen" ordained minister of the Church of Christ, that we are confronted. Were it such, the reference to the Jewish priesthood would be legitimate, and the argument conclusive; but it is with the ordinances of a priesthood that never had—that never can have—an existence in the Church of Christ;—a priesthood, moreover, that finds its counterpart beyond the pale of the Church, Jewish or Christian,—yea, even in the whole existence and development of heathen idolatry!

Space forbids us further to pursue the subject at present. We are fully aware of the difficulties which this view involves, and the numerous questions to which it gives rise. But believing it to be true—yea, *the truth* requiring to be stated, we give it forth without dread of consequences—

"Fiat justitia ruat coelum."

In a subsequent paper, we hope to notice more fully the aspects of the Papacy, as foretold in the Bible, and also to consider the views of the Reformers regarding the question before us, as embodied in the Standards of the Church of Scotland, and specially set forth in the National Covenant. We think that it is possible to reconcile the facts to which Dr Cooke refers, regarding the baptism of the Reformers, with the views now expressed regarding the validity of Popish ordinances.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Life and some Remains of the late Rev. Duncan Macfarlane, D.D., of Renfrew.

The Life by the Rev. Robert Smith, D.D., of Lochwinnoch. Paisley: Alexander Gardener. Edinburgh: Shepherd & Elliot; Johnstone & Hunter. 1856.

It is manifest, from what is stated and contained in this volume, that Dr Macfarlane was a gentleman of excellent natural abilities—of great industry and activity—an exemplary Christian, and devoted servant of Christ. It is evident, also, that he had a considerable standing and influence in the Church of Scotland previous to the Disruption, and in the Free Church subsequent to that event. He was first connected

with the Relief Church; but, instead of continuing in connection with that Church, he was led to apply to the Established Presbytery of Glasgow to take him on trials for license, and was licensed by that Court in 1824. He thus came to be reconciled to the existence of lay-patronage in the Church, provided it was not enforced with rigour on reclaiming congregations, and did not take higher ground than that of non-intrusion afterwards.

The writer of the life, Dr Smith, also speaks of the *law* as to patronage as *good*, and seems quite reconciled that the patron should have the *selection* of the pastor who is to be set over a congregation. "The *law*," says he, "was good, and all that was necessary was to correct abuses and reform the practice. Men will commit murder, and adultery, and other crimes, under the best constitution and law; but this is no good reason for complaining of the law, or for leaving the country." And these seem to have been the sentiments in relation to patronage of the great majority of those who took part in the Free Church movement.

It appears also, from what is stated by Dr Smith, pp. 90 and 91, that those who acted at the time of the Disruption were prepared to take lower ground than the Veto Act—that they would have consented that the people should be required to give reasons for their opposition to the presentee—provided the Church Courts were allowed to give a final decision as to the validity or non-validity of these reasons; in other words, they only insisted in the *Liberum arbitrium*. His words are—

"It may indeed be said that this did not warrant the passing of the Veto law, and the power of rejecting a presentee *without reasons assigned*; but those who are now members of the Free Church did not think the assigning of reasons an insuperable objection. The dissent of a majority of male heads of families was only one out of many ways by which the principle of non-intrusion could be maintained. Anything that would have secured the position and privileges of the Christian people—that would have relieved the consciences of the members of the Church Courts, and given them the uncontrolled power of rejecting a presentee who they conscientiously believed could not be useful—would have prevented the disruption of the Church. They only insisted on a *Liberum arbitrium*, which was enjoyed under the Revolution Settlement: "the power of *ordering and concluding* the entry of ministers, without appeal to the Civil Courts, or any control by them."

They only insisted that the Church Courts should be left to be the judges of the character of the objections offered by the people, and sustain these or not as they saw cause.

It is understood, from the statements of Dr Smith, as well as manifold other proofs, that the ministers of the Free Church in general were, so far from being dissatisfied with the Revolution Settlement, the Act of Union, or even the law of Patronage, that they gloried in the whole constitution of the Revolution Church, and only complained that the laws and constitution had been misinterpreted, or violated by the Civil Courts.

It is plain, also, from what is contained in the "remains," that Dr Macfarlane, though he entered at an early age into a personal covenant with God, and frequently renewed this afterwards, had strange prejudices against the British Covenants. With all his acuteness, he

did not understand this great subject, or was unable to rise above the prejudices of education to the great principles on which the Reformers acted, in their earnest endeavours to accomplish a Scriptural Reformation, not only of the Church, but also of the nation, in its laws and administrations, or a civil as well as an ecclesiastical reformation. Much confusion of thought, on the subject of intolerance or persecution, with which Dr Macfarlane so vehemently charges the Covenants, in his speech to the Paisley Presbytery, arises from not distinguishing between *negative* and *positive* toleration—the latter of which no society or nation can warrantably give to error or evil of any kind, any more than an individual. No nation can, without contracting guilt, give positive countenance to what is at variance with the truth and law of God. Nor, on the other hand, is any nation excusable in failing to give positive countenance to truth and righteousness. Were it so, it would not be a subject of the moral government of God. This, however, is not inconsistent with negative toleration, or the extension of simple forbearance and protection, to those who do not propagate tenets, nor follow practices which are obviously hurtful to the general interests of society, or threaten danger, from open violence or secret conspiracies, to the lawful institutions, civil or ecclesiastical, of a nation.

This volume will be peculiarly acceptable to those belonging to the Free Church, and there is much in it by which Christians in general, and Christian ministers in particular, may be edified.

The Works of Thomas M'Crie, D.D. A New Edition, edited by his Son, Thomas M'Crie, D.D., LL.D. Vol. III. *The Reformation in Italy—the Reformation in Spain.* Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1856.

THIS third volume of the beautiful edition of the Works of this truly great man, which the Messrs Blackwood are now issuing, lies before us; and we do not wonder though the matter contained in it was the favourite part of his Works with the author himself. Nor are we surprised that it had the honour of being put in the Index Expurgatorius of the Pope of Rome. For in both its parts—both in the History of the Reformation in Italy and in Spain—it contains a mass of irrefragable evidence, which demonstrates, in as far as history can demonstrate any fact, that the pretensions of the Bishop of Rome are utterly baseless.

Everything done by Dr M'Crie bespeaks the hand of a master; and, with all the admiration which we have for the proofs of this furnished in the Lives of Knox and Melville—in which the author had to draw his materials chiefly from works written in his native tongue, and the libraries of his own country—we think Dr M'Crie's singular penetration, rare industry, and indomitable perseverance, shine, in the results furnished in this volume, with a degree of brightness to which, considering the circumstances in which Dr M'Crie was placed, we know no parallel.

In the history of the Reformation in Spain, we have not merely a history of the Reformation, but of Christianity, in Spain, from its earliest introduction into that kingdom to the present time, which no

Spanish patriot can fail to read with interest. As the author, in his *History of the Reformation in Italy*, proves it to be "an undoubted fact, though it may appear improbable to those who are imperfectly acquainted with ecclesiastical history, that the supremacy claimed by the Bishops of Rome was resisted in Italy after it had been submitted to by the most remote churches of the west." He makes it equally manifest that the illustrious ancestors of the now priest-ridden Spanish nation long boldly asserted their independence against the claims and encroachments of the Romish See. We have here also interesting information regarding the opinions, the struggles, and sufferings of the renowned Waldenses and their associates during the ages of Popish domination, which extended to Spain, to which some of these witnesses fled, and in which they found an asylum for a time, but were afterwards called to seal their testimony with their blood in the land of their exile.

In the concise exhibition of the rise and progress of the Reformation in Italy and Spain, which was the author's main object, we have brought under review, along with a statement of facts, supported by an appeal to authorities at almost every sentence, a number of faithful witnesses, raised at that period in these countries, distinguished for learning, courage, constancy, and high Christian attainment, whose sufferings and failure in their noble enterprise it is melancholy to contemplate, but which tends to excite hope that there is yet mercy in store for the countries in which such confessors and martyrs were raised up. The notes appended to this edition by the editor are also valuable, and, so far, bring down the history to present times.

This volume furnishes ample materials at this crisis in the contest with Popery, and will be read with peculiar interest at a time when the two countries are in such a critical condition, whose past history has here such a halo of attraction thrown around it. Such are the extent and variety of matter contained in, or referred to, in this part of the works of the distinguished author, that, instead of a brief notice, to which our space at present limits us, one is strongly tempted to write a lengthened review.

Dying in Jesus before Sebastopol. An Incident of the Armies in the Crimea; by the Rev. Adolphe Monod. And Brief Remembrances of the late Colonel Shadforth, 57th Regiment. Tenth Thousand. London: M. Brown, 14, Barton Street, Eaton Square. Glasgow: G. Gallie; R. S. Brown. Edinburgh: Greig and Son. 1856.

THIS is a very interesting little tract, containing striking proofs of the success of humble instrumentality in promoting the work of God, and of the power of religion to sustain and comfort the soldier amidst the perils of the battle-field, the privations and sufferings of the camp, and in death itself. One of the very pleasing things which has appeared in the late terrible war, is the remarkable illustrations which have been furnished, in the lives of some of the officers and common soldiers, of the power of godliness, rendering them at once devoted to the discharge of public duty, and to the cause of God and the good of the souls of men. We have no room for extracts.

CONCLUDING ADDRESS—WARNING AGAINST THE RACES.

Song of Solomon iii. 6 to end.

WHAT manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness? The people of God are in the world, but they are not of the world. They are coming up out of the wilderness in obedience to these calls, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord; touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed, by the renewing of your mind, proving what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of the Lord." If it be not conformity to the world to countenance and frequent balls, promiscuous dancings, theatrical entertainments, and horse-racing, there can be no such thing as conformity to the world in our day. But if those who make a profession of the name of Christ will indulge in conformity to the world, let them ponder these solemn words, "Why say this people, we are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain"! "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven."

Among all the weeks of the year, there is none in which God is more dishonoured than in the week of the races. There is none in which profane swearing, Sabbath breaking, whoredom, drunkenness, and all sorts of iniquity do more abound. But it may be asked, If the races are so hateful to God, why does he permit them? We answer: God could easily prevent them. He has wind and rain, thunder and lightning, at will, and a thousand arrows in his quiver, by any one of which, made ready on the strings to fly against the faces of his enemies, he could disperse them as the chaff before the wind; but, for wise and holy reasons, the Most High sometimes does not restrain sinners from what they have determined to do, that he may allow them to fill up the measure of their iniquity; for, "he that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy;" and that he may try the faith, fidelity, and steadfastness of his own people.

Some will tell us, "the races, in themselves, are harmless things, for horses were made to run, and horses are fond of running." I answer, horses were made to run on all lawful occasions. Horses are God's useful creatures; but they never were created to gratify the lusts of ungodly men, and they never will be put to the uses for which they were made until that day come when there will be inscribed "on the bells of the horses, holiness to the Lord." We grant that horses are fond of running, and dogs, and other animals, given to fighting. But, tell me, is the Word of God, or are the inclinations of the inferior animals and brute beasts, to be our rule? "Ye are not your own, but bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your bodies

and spirits, which are God's." "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." But it may be asked, —Does not the Apostle Paul approve of races, when he says, "Know ye not that they who run in a race run all, but one obtaineth the prize?" But will the objector tell us if the Apostle Paul also approves of the bull-fights of Spain, when he says, "If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die." And, further, will the objector tell us if the Lord himself approves of theft, when he says, "Behold, I come as a thief. The day of the Lord will so come as a thief in the night. If the goodman of the house had known at what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of Man cometh."

Let all, therefore, who tremble at the word of the Lord—who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity—and who are concerned for the souls of men,—especially let all who have adopted the Secession Testimony against public and practical evils, save themselves from this untoward generation. Among all that vast assembly that shall be convened to witness the fashionable spectacle of the races, there will not be found one concerning whom the world will inquire, "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness, like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, and with all powders of the merchant?" There will not be found among them one of the valiant of Israel, who are around "King Solomon's bed,—who all hold swords, being expert in war; every man having his sword girt upon his thigh, because of fear in the night." There will not be found among them all so much as one who is conveyed to the race-ground in Solomon's chariot, the midst of which is lined with love for the daughters of Jerusalem. And we trust that there will not be found among them one so far left of God as to countenance such scenes of iniquity,—of those who have this day gone forth to "behold King Solomon with the crown where-with his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart."

GENERAL RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

BURMAH.

FROM what is contained in the interesting statements which are added, and have been received by the *News of the Churches* from authentic sources, it appears that very remarkable success is attending Missionary operations in different parts of the Burman Empire—not only among the Karens, of whom some account was formerly given in our pages, but also among the Burmese themselves. This is very cheering, and contains new proof of what God can do in a short time by limited means, when he prepares the hearts of men:—

"The Burmese and the Karens," says the writer of the paper, "are wholly distinct from each other, widely differing in language, character, and customs; and as missionary operations are pursued amongst them in a manner adapted to their respective

peculiarities, their success has been marked by features characteristic of each race. I may well, therefore, write of them separately.

"The former are a very intelligent people, and much better educated than the majority of eastern nations. Till lately, their bigotry against the gospel was as bitter as that of any sect in India, and their pride so lofty, that the religion of Jesus was altogether beneath their notice. In 1837 they expelled from their country the American missionaries who had been labouring among them for nearly twenty years, and sought to crush, by long-continued oppression, where they failed to extirpate by persecution, the Christian faith which these men had been honoured in establishing there.

"This, however, proved to be a tree of the Lord's planting, and too deeply rooted to be destroyed by the malice of the enemy. After seventeen long years of oppression, indeed, it languished and drooped. Many little companies of Christians continued to hold fast the faith which had been committed to them; but, during all this time, they had never been cheered by a visit from any of those godly men from whom they originally received it, and were deprived of the comfort and support of mutual sympathy by the necessity of their not congregating together for fear of attracting observation, and thereby incurring persecution.

"When, therefore, a fresh persecution broke out against them in the beginning of 1852, and some two or three hundreds, of both sexes and all ages, seized in different cities on the Irrawaddy, were carried to Ava to appear before the king himself, then, indeed, it appeared as if they were to be finally crushed at last, and that their long night of sorrow was never to have a close. Its darkest hour, however, was nearest the dawn which they so little anticipated; the late king (before whom they were brought), on learning that the only accusation against them was that they refused to worship Gaudama, and bring offerings to the priests, and that in other respects they were blameless, declared that he had no fault to find with them, and ordered their immediate restoration to their homes, reprimanding severely the governors who had sent to him as criminals those who proved to be such peaceable subjects.

"Very shortly after this, Pegu passed into the power of the British; the missionaries, who had been expelled from it so long, returned to the province immediately; and once more, "even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," so was the Son of man lifted up among the people, by their preaching, drawing unto him not only those—God's hidden ones—who had been waiting so long for this happy day, and now came joyfully forth from their seclusion to rejoice in the name of Jesus, but multitudes of their countrymen besides, who, convinced by the judgments which he had poured out upon their land, of the existence of an almighty and invisible God, to whom their idolatry was evidently hateful, and that it was powerless for their protection, came in crowds to inquire about him, and about that Saviour whom they had so long and so stubbornly resisted.

"On many occasions, when preaching, as they thought, to a company wholly composed of idolaters, have the missionaries been both astonished and delighted to find one or two among them not only acquainted with the truths of Christianity, but believers in them; and the following story will illustrate the manner in which the seeds of gospel truth, sown by the missionaries in that country previous to their expulsion from it in 1837, have probably brought forth good fruit in hundreds of similar cases, the records of which are written in the book of life, and will never be revealed till that is opened.

"When preaching one day at a town called Shoaydong, near Prome, a missionary observed among his hearers one who, though a perfect stranger to him, seemed to be no stranger to the story of Jesus which he was telling, and to which the man listened as if it was both familiar to his ear, and dear to his heart. When questioned, he said that he had learned it from a little book which he or another had received many years before from a white teacher, who had stopped to preach at that town while journeying up the river; that the book had been brought to his village—a remote one in the interior—where it had been read by many, and that nearly all who had read it had abandoned idolatry, refusing any longer to support the priests of Gaudama, who had at length left the village altogether; that they had been longing for further instruction in the religion of this little book, but in vain: they knew not where to seek for it. Hearing, however, that white teachers were at Prome, preaching about their own God—that he had been sent to see them, and invite them to go to his village, but at all events to get some more books such as the one which had wrought such a change in their ideas, if these teachers had any. The man was

promised some on the morrow, and was asked to bring his own which he had spoken of. He did so, and the *little book* proved to be a copy of the *Gospel of St John* in the Burmese language, which must have been given away by one of the missionaries fully sixteen years before. A precious little volume it had been to the happy owner of it and his friends; and when he was offered another and a better copy in exchange for it, with an affection every way worthy of his treasure, as honourable to himself, the man would not part with it on any account. His village was subsequently visited by one of the missionaries, who found that the man's statement was quite true: the villagers were eager for instruction in Christianity; some of them were baptized without further delay, while many others are on probation. They have built a *sayat*, or place of worship, and have also opened a school; a native preacher has been stationed among them, and they support him themselves.

"This is by no means a solitary instance of the change which has taken place in the feelings of the Burmese in Pegu towards Christianity. As I have already stated, they are an educated people, and nearly every man can read. Innumerable are the instances in which men have listened to the preaching of the Word when visiting a mission station, and on going away have carried with them a gospel or a tract in their own language, which has been read and thought upon till it has brought them back again, almost in spite of themselves, to hear more of the way of salvation from the missionaries or native Christian preachers. In this state of mind did a man come to the missionaries at Rangoon one day, stating that he had, on a former occasion, taken some of their books to his village, and had read them to his wife, telling her that he wanted to become a Christian—that she had been taken very ill, and had died declaring that she believed in the religion of these books, and that he had now come back to them to learn more about Jesus. He remained till he had been baptized, and then returned to his village, soon after which three of his friends came to the missionaries for instruction, bringing an urgent application from him for books and a preacher, as he was building a *sayat*, and his neighbours were all anxious to know something about the eternal God.

"Some six months ago, the wives of two of the missionaries at Rangoon made a short tour in the jungles, chiefly by water, and with no attendance save that of some native Christian females and preachers, to visit the Burmese and Karen women, and discover what opening there might be among them for the gospel. Their tour led them through districts where no white face had ever been seen: everywhere they were received with the utmost kindness and respect; and everywhere was there such a general desire for information about the religion of Jesus, that they found it utterly impossible to speak to the women alone, but were obliged to declare their message to men also, as they thronged to them for instruction, and could not be excluded from their audiences. That this was no idle and passing curiosity on their part, may be gathered from the fact, that, after the return of these noble women to Rangoon, men came from the districts which they had visited, and embraced Christianity, bringing urgent appeals from their villages that teachers might be sent to them, and more books.

"Last November, a tour was made by a missionary and his wife in another direction altogether, through some parts of the delta of the Irrawaddy. They visited some very large towns, and wherever they went they were received most gladly. At one town, in particular, the head man manifested the greatest pleasure on seeing them, as he had heard the missionary preach when he had been at Rangoon not long before; and he was so eager for instruction himself, and that all under him should hear the gospel, that he sent out men with gongs to go through the town, and proclaim that on the following day the white teacher would preach in the hall of judgment, and that all were invited to come and hear him. When the hour arrived, so great was the crowd that one side of the house was removed, in order that those standing in the street, and who could not find room inside, might hear the glad tidings of salvation from the missionary's lips. Most eagerly did they all listen to the word of life, and very pressing and numerous were the invitations which the people gave to the good missionary to remain with them altogether, or at least to send them some preachers who might do so; and when, shortly after his return to Rangoon, the head man, who had made him so welcome at his village, appeared at their meeting one evening, accompanied by some of his townsmen, renewing their application for books and preachers, an effort was immediately made to comply with it; and let us pray that it may be followed by a rich blessing to that village, for the glory of God, who has so wonderfully disposed the hearts of the people to listen to the gospel.

"I could go on to give many details of deep interest, to show how widely spread this feeling is in Pegu; but I fear I have already exceeded my limits. If the word is not everywhere gladly received or willingly listened to, there is *nowhere* that hostility to it for which the Burmese were remarkable at one time. Within the last three months, the highest native official in Rangoon, though an idolater himself, of his own accord gave the missionaries 100 rupees towards the building of a church there, saying that he saw that the religion which they preached was a good one, and he persuaded others of his heathen friends to subscribe also.

"When your readers find that idolaters have conceived such a respect for Christianity, that they can thus, unsolicited, contribute towards its propagation, they will not be surprised to hear that *self-denial* is a striking characteristic of the Burmese native Christians. They have no idea of depending on others for the building of *pagodas* and the support of their preachers; but there is a natural and universal impulse among them to do this themselves, if possible: nor do they stop there, for they can deny themselves for the sake of bringing the gospel to others too, as they have shown in innumerable instances."

TURKEY.

The following statement regarding the doings of the Turkish authorities, by the correspondent of the *News of the Churches*, will be read with melancholy interest. It is very painful to think that the expectations excited in the minds of so many by the celebrated "Hatti Humayoom" of the Sultan, which promised so much, are to be utterly disappointed, and that the supposed law, proclaiming religious liberty and equality of rights to Christians with Mussulmen throughout the Turkish Empire, is hitherto a dead letter, and that the hope of its being anything else soon is very slender. The letter is dated Constantinople, September 10, 1856.

"A sufficient time has now elapsed to enable us to see, at least, something of the manner in which the provisions of the far-famed Hatti Humayoom are to be carried out. This great State paper was issued last February, and it gave great satisfaction to all who wish well for Turkey. Its liberal provisions were honourable alike to the Sultan who issued it, and to the British Ambassador, through whose strenuous and persevering efforts chiefly it was obtained. During the six months and more that have intervened since the promulgation of this charter of liberty to the Christians of Turkey, if we could not reasonably expect to see all its provisions carried fully into effect, we had a right to look for some preliminary steps, at least, towards such a result. At any rate, it might fairly be expected that the Porte would now very promptly interfere in glaring cases of mal-administration, and especially of oppression and persecution, by the subordinate authorities. In this moderate expectation even we have been entirely disappointed; and the Porte itself is sanctioning acts of tyranny and outrage that are worthy of the most barbarous days of the Musselman rule,—confirming what has often been said by knowing ones here on the ground, that the Hatti Humayoom was got up to blind the eyes of the European Powers, and that there was never the slightest intention of carrying it into effect.

"The instrument referred to declares to the world that, henceforth, all classes of the Sultan's subjects are alike to him, whether they be Mussulmans, Christians, or Jews; it forbids the use of all opprobrious epithets by Mussulmans towards Christians, such as *giaour*, &c.; it opens the different civil offices, up to a certain degree, equally to Christians and Mussulmans; it allows of the testimony of Christians in the courts of justice, and gives equal force to such testimony; it allows of the transfer of real estate to Christian names, and even to foreigners; it proclaims that every man's conscience is free, and that no constraint shall be used to compel a man to change his religious profession,—which was officially interpreted to Lord Stratford to mean, that Mussulmans should henceforth be free to become Christians if they liked. Now, in no one particular has the Porte as yet taken any effectual steps to fulfil its promises to its Christian subjects and to Europe, in any of these respects, and, from present appearances, it has no intention of doing so. Encouraged by the imperial firman, an Armenian here in Constantinople, whose name I could give, purchased a house of a Turk, and the transfer was made on the books at the registrar's office (the *efkaf*); but this officer refused to hand over the deeds of property to the Christian, saying that no orders had yet been addressed to him by the Porte to that effect. Meanwhile, the Mussulmans residing in the vicinity of the house in

question got wind of the matter, and rose up *en masse*, declaring that no *Christian* should ever take possession of that house. The Armenian now appealed to the Porte, backing up his right to the property by a reference to the new Hattı Humayoom. The Porte, in its usual shuffling manner, sent an order to the head of the police that he should restrain those rebellious Musselmans, who were attempting to oppose the imperial decree, which order is well understood to mean nothing at all. If the Porte was honest, the first order would be to the *efkaf* (registry office), in accordance with the Hattı Humayoom, to make no distinction between Musselmans and Christians in the transfer of property. Until this is done, nothing is done, and that famous State paper stands as a blinder to Europe, and a dead letter at home.

"In like manner, to this day, neither the power or influence of the British Ambassador, or any other Ambassador, has been sufficient to cause the transfer of a single foot of ground in Constantinople to the name of a foreigner, though multitudes of applications have been made. The answer of the Porte to all such applications is, that *the details of the plan have not yet been arranged*; the true meaning of which is, that they have no intention of ever doing the thing, unless absolutely compelled.

"So, also, in regard to the admission of Christian testimony against Musselmans in courts of justice, nothing of the sort has been done, and multitudes of judges all over the country have openly declared that they will positively never allow it; and the fact is, they have never been ordered to do so by the Porte. The Hattı Humayoom is understood everywhere to have been prepared for Europe, and not for Turkey.

"The question of religious liberty has not yet been fairly tested; but the faithlessness of the government in regard to its other pledges is not calculated to inspire much confidence in its loyal intentions in regard to this. The fact is, the Turk, by nature, hates the Christian races, and those who are so unfortunate as to be under his own dominion he despises, as well as hates, from the bottom of his heart. During the war with Russia, when the very existence of Turkey, as a nation, was in the hands of the Allied Powers, the ministers of the Sultan, with the most sycophantic smiles, were ready to promise anything to England and France; but now that the danger is considered over, and particularly since all the Allied troops are withdrawn, they are assuming all their former independence and superciliousness; and they have already begun, as I have intimated, to practise oppression and cruelty after their former fashion.

"A wealthy and perfectly honourable Greek Protestant, residing in Magnesia, near Smyrna, without even a show of trial, or even a charge against him, was first hurried off to Smyrna and imprisoned for months, and then perpetually banished to Gallipoli, by the Imperial Government itself, with the liberal-minded Ali Pasha at its head! The persecuted man got permission to come to the capital, and obtained an audience with the grand vizier, where he begged to be regularly tried, saying that he was willing to die if he was a malefactor. The result, after a delay of some weeks, was a confirmation of his sentence of banishment, without trial, and personal abuse from Ali Pasha himself, because he had forsaken the Greek Church and become a Protestant! This is his only crime, and for this he is separated from his family, driven from his home, ruined in his business, and condemned to perpetual exile; and all the efforts of the English and Dutch Ambassadors to procure his release have been hitherto fruitless!

"An Armenian girl, scarcely fifteen years of age, residing near Kharpoot, is forcibly made a Musselman, being taken out of her own father's house, and compelled to remain, against her will, in a Mahometan family, and the Turkish authorities of the province sanction the outrage; and for this no redress can be had at the capital.

"The building occupied as the depot of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Constantinople, and also of the books of the American Mission jointly, is owned by Mustapha Pasha, formerly grand vizier. At the beginning of the last year, the Pasha raised the rent, which was paid accordingly, he giving a paper over his own seal, acknowledging that payment had been made in full for one year to come. Not three months had elapsed, however, before he began to demand more; and as the contract had been made in the name of one of the clerks of the establishment, who is a Protestant Armenian, the Pasha uttered sundry threats if his unrighteous demands were not complied with. This Protestant was brought before a Turkish tribunal, and, for a few plainly spoken words against the injustice of the claim, he was yesterday thrown into prison! He is a *Christian*, and his rulers are *Turks*, and they are going to teach him the duty of quiet submission to whatever injustice or oppression it may suit them to practise."

THE ORIGINAL SECESSION MAGAZINE.

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AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM.

MAN is fallen, but still immortal. His nature is gross and sinful, but it refuses to be satisfied with the mere physical gratifications beyond which the animal creation cannot look. Nothing is more common than to find that those who possess most of physical luxury enjoy least of real happiness and content; and especially does man, in every clime, and in savage as well as civilized life, feel that he has religious faculties to exercise, and religious wants to be supplied. Apart from the concerns of a never-ending eternity, man, in every condition of society, realizes more or less distinctly the fact that he is not living worthily when he does not look beyond the merely temporary and passing. Even a Voltaire and a Paine illustrate this tendency in the ingenious infatuation with which they pursue a phantom ideal of the beautiful and the true—foolishly attempting to hug sunbeams that fall alike on the evil and the good, and mistaking them for the source of light and blessing—unphilosophically attempting to place the pyramid of human society on its apex, by making the fine but fragile intellect of man at once support and resist his strong will and impetuous passions—madly attempting to make the part as great as the whole, by assuming that man, of himself, can comprehend the great system of which he is but a fractional and changing portion. Still, even these vain and impious attempts serve to illustrate the innate and irresistible craving after nobler and more permanent than mere material knowledge and enjoyments.

This craving in the unrenewed man develops itself alternately in infidelity and superstition. The latter is its normal shape, and hence the strength of the Papacy. It is curious to observe, in the biographies and general history of that apostacy, how independent minds within its pale have oscillated between blind credulity and universal incredulity. The phenomenon cannot be explained on merely intellectual grounds. It is a matter of will and propensity rather than of intellect. Men, unenlightened by Divine truth, feel that they are, so far as their higher being is concerned, tossing about on the waves

of life, without any well-defined aim, without any well-grounded hope, and ready at any moment to drop into the unfathomed depths of eternity; and, till led to lay hold on the Rock of Salvation, they clutch at every bit of weed that floats past them, not from a conviction that they are thereby doing themselves any good, but simply from an instinctive anxiety and consciousness of danger.

Of this extraordinary vibration between blind scepticism and rank superstition we have a remarkable instance in our own day. We find, on the one hand, a deplorably extensive school, represented by M. Comte, who see in the universe, with all its rich variety, its bounding pulsations of life, and its endless provision for human wants, but a mere machine,—who see in man himself, with all his fancies, and convictions, and motives, and aspirations, but a piece of mechanism, the movements of which may be regulated as we regulate a steam-engine. And we find, on the other hand, the new American doctrine of “media,” which tells us that human beings and material objects are but tools in the hands of spirits, sometimes visible, but for the most part invisible. Each of these rank heresies is based on a perversion of truth—the most dangerous of all foundations for a heresy. M. Comte is right when he says that the universe is a grand system of steady and consistent operation, and we ought to have no jealousy of the fullest demonstration of that truth. But we are entitled to accuse the Positivist professor of infatuation, or of something even worse, when he refuses to look at the meaning of that system—at its manifest tendencies and its irresistible evidences of design. This conduct is as irrational as would be that of looking at a man working, and refusing to admit that the work produced is an evidence of purpose or even of consciousness. M. Comte’s blunder is that he views the effect apart from the cause, without which it could not exist. A dog is conscious, when struck, that there must have been some cause for the blow, and, when fed or fondled, it will manifest gratitude. But M. Comte asks us to look upon disease and all the ills of life, as well as upon our daily food and all the benefits of Providence, as but incidents in the operation of a great universal unconscious machine. In proof of this, he points to the unvarying regularity of what are called the laws of nature. When we see a man working, we regard it as at once a mark of intelligence and of fixed purpose that he proceeds on a definite and coherent plan; but, with amazing inconsistency, our modern secularists and materialists seek to persuade themselves that, in the power and perfection with which the varied and intricate operations of nature are carried on, they should see proof of the absence of any intelligent cause.

American Spiritualism, to which we design drawing attention, is a violent reaction from these chilling doctrines of modern secularism, and throws its votaries into just the opposite extreme of absurdity. It peoples the atmosphere and our dwellings with spirits, and it pretends to prove the existence of these spirits by “manifestations” of already multitudinous and still multiplying variety. We are asked to believe that these spirits prove their presence among those who credit their existence “in writing, drawing, playing on musical instruments,

visions, trances, elevation of heavy substances and living persons in the air, spirit hands, spirit voices, spirit healing," &c. This statement we quote from a leading article in a Spiritualist periodical. If any apology be needed in offering a few remarks on the subject, it may be found in the startling fact that the number of those holding the principles and following the practices of this new sect in America alone has been computed at three millions; and even in England, they are numerous and influential enough to support periodical organs of their own. We have before us four numbers of an English monthly periodical, somewhat larger than the *Original Secession Magazine*, published in London, and devoted exclusively to the propagation of belief in what are called "spirit manifestations."

We cannot object to the theory that we are surrounded by spirits. That theory has deep root in the natural belief of humanity; there is nothing to militate against it in reason; and it is countenanced by revelation. Neither is there anything absurd in the abstract doctrine that communication may be held between men and beings of another world. Revelation recognises and illustrates the possibility of such communication. And though we have every reason to believe that the times of supernatural manifestations have passed, we have no right to hold that they are even now impossible, or that our essential relations with the spirit world have been altered. When therefore we find, in a civilized country, thirty thousand persons who profess to be what are called "media" between the spirit world and ordinary humanity, and three millions of Anglo-Saxon Americans who declare their belief in their alleged revelations, it is right to examine the nature of their statements—not because any rightly constituted mind can entertain serious doubt as to their character and value, but to ascertain, if possible, how doctrines so extraordinary have found acceptance so wide spread.

The easiest explanation of all the stories of the Spiritualists, and the most probable explanation of most of them, is, that they are impositions. The simplest forms of them are those of table-rapping, &c.; and their nature may be gathered from the following sample, related by Dr Hare, an American professor, who has attempted to develop Spiritualism into a science :—

"The question was put to my friend, if a demonstration could be had to gratify my curiosity, and strengthen my assurance, when the following dialogue occurred :—'Will the spirits be so obliging as to make a physical demonstration? Answered by three raps on the table, which were responded to by an affirmative expression from the whole circle. My seat was at the side of the medium, a married lady of considerably more than ordinary weight. *Ques.* Will the spirits move Mrs D. in her chair?—*Ans.* Yes. As this demonstration was intended for my special benefit, and our invisible friends were fully committed for its performance, my attention was riveted on the lady who was to be the subject of it. 'Madam, will you please put your feet on the spar of the chair?' This being fully accomplished, 'and your hands in your lap,' was added. As her hands dropped, *the lady left my side*, passed about two feet backward, and immediately returned to her former position at the table."

We need not multiply examples of these "manifestations," for they are all "as like each other as peas;" and none of them seem more wonderful than some of the tricks of travelling wizards. It is a sus-

picious circumstance, too, that the phenomena are seldom alleged to have appeared in presence of parties who had prepared themselves for a vigorous examination into the possibility of deception. While the spirit-rapping fever was at its full height, a professor of necromancy challenged any "medium" in America to produce a rap on a table in his presence for which he would not account by a natural cause; and he pledged himself to forfeit ten thousand dollars if he failed. The rappers pretended to accept the challenge; but it was found that they refused to allow the complete inspection of their operations necessary to detect imposition, if it existed. One of the organs of the sect, in attempting to justify this refusal, says:—

"It is found, by experience, that the mere presence of some persons is sufficient to interrupt them (the spirits); and that the requisite conditions, whatever they may be, are like the case of a man in armour inspecting a mariner's compass, counteracted by the introduction of new laws."

This seems very like telling us that the "manifestations" find acceptance only with those whose minds are undisciplined, uninformed, and facile. And this is corroborated by the terrible statement which has been made public—that Spiritualism has added thousands to the inmates of American lunatic asylums. This statement Mr Hayden, one of the Spiritualist writers, has the assurance to palliate thus:—

"Men are likewise continually being rendered insane by various religious excitements, as well as by close application to study, and unremitting attention to mercantile business, in our large cities."

The spirits, however, we are told, do not now confine themselves to mere rapping on tables, but exhibit themselves in various forms. One of the most remarkable stories that has been published is that by the Rev. Thomas L. Harris, whose account of his wife's death is published in the *Spiritual Telegraph* as follows:—

"On Tuesday evening, about six o'clock, the spirits of her relatives, in company with other spirits, to the number of about thirty, entered the room, and, while she was apparently asleep, formed a circle around the bed. I was placed at this time, by their influence, in a deep interior condition, retaining, however, full possession of all the external faculties and powers. From the moment this circle of spirits was formed, she became free from all pain.

"We watched the ebbing life of the external form till about a quarter before twelve (midnight). Gradually we felt the pulse sinking to rest. At that time a sudden light, like a diffused silver radiation, came and rested upon her face. A wondrous smile played upon her countenance. Such divine love, such ineffable peace, diffused itself, melting into light in the air around her, that she seemed transfigured and changing into an angel before our sight.

"As her eyes began to close, kneeling by her side, I inclined my face to the pillow by her cheek, and laid my arm over her form. Heavenly bliss filled all the internals of my mind, and I passed at once into *rapport* with her spirit. Gradually I felt her spirit form arising from the external. As it arose, my own arms were lifted by it. I saw a vortex or spiral of white light, narrowing to the diameter of about two feet, just above her body, and opening above it into the SPIRITUAL WORLD. In this vortex were innumerable angelic forms, and as she entered the spiral, they lifted her from my arms. She disappeared in that transcendent light."

This Mrs Harris, like her husband, was of course a "medium;" and we find a very significant statement in the brief memoir of her

that has been published. It is said—"The subject of this notice was never fully assured of the realities of the spirit world by any experience of her own till her health was seriously impaired;" and it is note-worthy that, even by the confessions of the Spiritualists themselves, the "media" are invariably persons of feeble and usually persons of diseased bodies and minds. Bishop Berkeley's theory has long and properly been repudiated by philosophy; but the Bishop's notion, ridiculous as it was, recognised a truth which has too often been lost sight of—the truth that the extent and nature of our vision depends materially on the extent and nature of our capabilities. When we look at a landscape, what we really see is a picture formed on the retina of the eye, and that picture will be more or less accurate according to the excellence of our vision. Eyes that are weak, or that have been recently strained, catch but an indistinct and faulty view of the scenery; and did the eye admit of distortion so utter as we often see befall the mind, it might cease to be worthy of reliance. He would be a silly person who, looking at a landscape with imperfect eyesight, should assume that the apparent tremulousness and refraction belonged to the landscape rather than to his own eyes; and of this silliness these Spiritualists must in many cases be guilty. They mistake the phantasies of their own morbid, diseased, and excited imaginations for actual objective facts, instead of mere subjective delusions; and, in accordance with a well-known law of human nature, the more they are ridiculed the more they regard themselves as the sole custodiers of wisdom and knowledge. But disease is not confined to the body and the imagination or intellect. There is a moral disease still more disastrous. There are times when men allow what we may call their natural religious faculties to lie dormant, by occupying themselves exclusively in imaginative pursuits, or with trade, commerce, and material enterprise. The result is that these faculties stagnate and send forth pernicious vapours. We have seen pools of water in still corners, that had long lain undisturbed, covered over with a film—often of brilliant colours and curious veinings,—a film of corruption, which tells us that the putrid water is breathing malaria, disease, and death. Just so the natural religious faculty of man, when left to lie neglected, unstirred by practical religious experience, and unvisited by the "wind that bloweth where it listeth," becomes stagnant and pestilent—brilliant in colours it may be, but only in the colours of a loathsome cancer. The man looks at his splendid malady, loves it, and mistakes the workings of his own diseased affections for revelations of truth. The drunk man believes implicitly, when reeling home from his midnight revels, that he sees two moons, and that the lamp-posts, and even the pavement, are in a very rickety and troubled condition; the man under the influence of opium believes himself inhabiting gorgeous palaces and reveling in exquisite delights. In these cases the disease of the brain and consequent delusions are temporary; while in the case of the Spiritualist "media," the disease and consequent delusions are permanent. Otherwise there seems to be little difference between the two classes of phenomena.

Many of the phenomena exhibited by these Spiritualists may also

be attributable to mesmerism, a subject on which it is usual to hear opinions expressed with more of confidence than of real intelligence. It may be that there is a communicating link between the mind and the body—a something partaking of the nature of spirit and of the nature of organized matter to the extent of being capable of acting upon both. And this may be what the animal magnetisers call “the od,” merely because they do not know what to call it. It may be, again, that some persons possess this substance in larger measure or in higher vigour than others, and that these are capable of influencing this connecting link between the mind and physical powers of weaker persons, and thus neutralising the independent motives and volition which belong to every member of the human family. All this may be, and, unless mesmerism be a delusion, something like it really is. We will farther admit the desirableness of eliminating, and satisfactorily investigating, every fact in nature which can help forward human science. But we must conduct our examinations in a legitimate way, and the practices of mesmerists are not legitimate. By their own confession, the individual under the influence of the mesmeric process loses, for the time, freedom of will and action, and must conform absolutely and in all things to the wishes and purposes of the operator. No rational and moral being—not to say Christian—can, without heinous sin, put himself or herself in such a position under any consideration whatever.

There is another explanation of these manifestations, and a very terrible one. We know that in times past mankind have had dealings with “familiar” spirits; and the stories of the American Spiritualists go to show that the spirits with which they pretend to have dealings are “familiar” enough. Take the following instance, which we quote from the published experiences of the “Rev. F. B. Barret,” a well-known New Jerusalemite clergyman in New York:—

“When all had retired, and the doors were closed, I requested the spirit to break the bottle if he could. He said he would try, and directly there came down upon the table a tremendous rap, as if some heavy man, standing upon it, had stamped with the heel of his boot. But the bottle was not broken. Again the heavy blow was heard, and the bottle fell upon the floor, but without being broken. One of the boys picked it up and placed it again upon the table, and as soon as his hands were fairly in mine, the heavy rap or blow was heard again; and these blows were repeated, I should think, some ten or twelve times, every time jarring the whole room, they were so loud and heavy, and the vial meantime falling upon the floor three or four times. But of this I am certain, that every time a heavy rap came, the mediums were sitting quite still, and both their hands firmly grasped by mine. At last came another jarring rap upon the table, and I heard the sound of broken glass; and instantly—I still holding fast the hands of the mediums—the trumpet was taken up and presented apparently very near my face, and these words distinctly pronounced through it: ‘I fixed the old thing at last.’”

There are only two kinds of spirits—glorified and condemned. To which can such antics as these, supposing the narrative to be correct, be attributed? Neither sacred nor profane history tells us of spirits appearing in this world in so sinister a fashion, and for purposes so inadequate as pinching people's legs, playing pranks with their watches or pocket handkerchiefs, breaking glass bottles, and answering impertinent questions by raps indicating letters in the English alphabet.

The same reverend gentleman from whom we quote the above, and who, so far as appearances go, would seem to be an honest man, says:—

"I have gathered many facts going to show the consummate craft and subtlety of the spirits, and how they will often communicate to their eager listeners many things true and beautiful at first, apparently for no other purpose than to gain their confidence, and thus lead them captive whithersoever they will."

As illustrating the amazing depths of infatuation to which humanity may descend, we add the comment of the *Spiritual Herald* on this:—

"But this argument proves too much; for, if a spirit is to be condemned because it persuades men to leave all and follow it—to spend their worldly goods and even their lives—then it follows that the early Christians themselves were following evil spirits; for they sold themselves out, and gave up their bodies a living sacrifice."

The English Spiritualists are quite as unscrupulous in their daring and blasphemous assumptions. We have an account of some alleged spirit manifestations at Coventry, where the spirits have attempted a bolder course than any adopted even in America. From the published account of the teachings of these spirits, we make the following extract, which our readers will allow to be more than sufficient:—

"Another important doctrine taught us is, that a prophet and teacher will arise, who will have power from on high to harmonise the many conflicting systems of faith that divide and distract society, and institute the true church of Christ. That as everything has its centre, a salt crystal as well as the solar system—that as every human sect and society has its little human centre—so the great family of man needs its human centre also. But as there have been so many in times past crying, 'Lo! here, or lo! there,' how shall we know the teacher when he comes? By the doctrine he teaches and the *power of divine magnetism* he will exercise over the souls of men."

This identifies the Spiritualists as belonging to the same family with the followers of Joe Smith and Johanna Southcote; and it affords a striking illustration of the fact, that natural religion is as essentially corrupt a thing as any other natural propensity of humanity. It is common in our day to hear men of position and influence in the world telling their fellow-men that, provided they cultivate amiable and benevolent feelings towards each other, it matters little what particular religious creed they may hold. In the above extracts, we see a specimen of the deadly delusions to which human nature runs when left to form its own religious creed. And be it remembered that there are many delusions quite as deadly, which are by no means so gross and palpable. Indeed, the less gross the delusion, it is, as a general rule, the more dangerous. The natural man has reason, and he has religious feeling, but both are corrupt, and must lead him into the valley of destruction, unless enlightened and regenerated by Divine grace. How infinite the difference between Spirituality and Spiritualism!—a difference greater than that between a human body enjoying robust health and another which has become food for worms. In both cases we have life, but, we repeat, how different! And there is quite as great and momentous a difference between the doctrines of those who, looking for guidance only "to the law and to the testimony," fix their hopes on the Work of Redemption, and the doctrines of those who tell us that the means of reforming man may be found within himself—that he wants development rather than regeneration.

SERMON.

1 Tim. i. 16. "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy," &c.

MERCY may be regarded as the promptitude or readiness of the Most High to relieve man in his guilt, depravity, and ruin. Its proper objects are the wretched and miserable, the poor and blind, the naked and destitute. It is not exercised towards the angels of light who stand in Jehovah's presence, and serve him day without night in his temple, for they are not its proper objects. Tophet is the region of misery, mourning, and woe, yet mercy has not one subject within its dark and melancholy realms. Its bright and cheering rays have never once dispelled the clouds and darkness which rest for ever over that land of gloom. Its cheering voice has never once been heard within that pit of woe. It is on earth that mercy has erected her glorious throne, from which she dispenses pardon and grace to help in time of need. It is on earth that she holds out her golden sceptre, that the guilty and perishing may touch its point and live. It is on earth that she rides on her chariots of salvation, scattering blessings with a liberal hand. It is on earth that her sweet voice is heard saying, "Incline your ear and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." It is on earth that she provides a hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, rivers of water in a dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. It is on earth that she provides chambers of rest for the weary pilgrim; the bread of life to nourish the hungry soul; the water of life to refresh the thirsty; and the wine of salvation to revive the spirit that is ready to perish. "The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy." There is not a sinner out of Tophet who has not cause to celebrate the riches of Divine mercy, saying, "It is of the Lord's mercies I am not consumed; it is because his compassions fail not." The conversion and apostleship of Paul form a standing monument of the magnitude of the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering," &c.

I. To state and shortly illustrate how the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ was manifested towards Paul. The Apostle viewed himself as a conspicuous monument of the riches of the Saviour's mercy for the encouragement of guilty and ruined sinners in all subsequent ages to betake themselves to Christ, that they might obtain life and salvation by him. The sovereign and distinguishing mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ was evinced towards Paul *in his conversion*. It was strikingly exhibited in the regeneration and conversion of such a sinner. In every individual case of conversion there is a rich display of the sovereign and distinguishing mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the translation of a sinner out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. It is the formation of a new creature,—"For if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are past away, all things are become new." In the conversion of Paul, however, we are furnished with a special manifestation of the mercy of the blessed Saviour. Paul was indeed, what he declares himself to

have been, the chief of sinners. He was a sinner of the first rank, of the very highest order. He was a persecutor, a blasphemer, an injurious person. He was exceedingly mad against the disciples of Christ, and persecuted them even into strange cities. He was withal a self-righteous Pharisee, regarding with complacency his own attainments and services. Never man appeared more inveterately opposed to Christianity, or more unlikely to submit to the gospel. But to the omnipotence of Divine grace there are no impossibilities. In the riches of the Redeemer's mercy, he turned this man, pre-eminent in guilt and criminality, from darkness to marvellous light; he arrested him in his mad career when running post-haste down to the lowest hell; he plucked him as a brand from everlasting burnings, when breathing out threatenings and slaughters against the followers of the Lamb; he made him a monument of the omnipotent power and energy of his grace to all future ages, when he might justly have made him an everlasting monument of his power and vengeance. Behold in the Apostle Paul the subject of a mighty change! Once was he darkness, now he is light in the Lord; once was he blind, now he sees. Behold in him a standing monument of the sovereign and distinguishing mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The sovereign and distinguishing mercy of our blessed Saviour was evinced towards Paul in *pardoning his guilt*, and freeing him from that condemnation and wrath to which he was obnoxious on account of sin. Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life and that which is to come; but some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others. The sins of Paul were of no ordinary magnitude; the burden of guilt that lay upon his shoulders was a tremendous weight; his criminality was enormous. He was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an injurious person. His crimes were of scarlet and crimson colour. They led the Saviour himself to say, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" It was the magnitude of his crimes that led him to claim the first place in the list of sinners saved by grace. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." His transgressions were in magnitude like the great mountains, and in number like the blades of grass in a meadow. The guilt and criminality of Paul was abundantly pardoned as an example of the Saviour's mercy. "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

The sovereign and distinguishing mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ was evinced towards Paul in *his high attainments as a Christian*. He was an advanced and experienced Christian. All his high attainments and rich experiences were traced by him to the superabounding grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence he affirms, "The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus." To the same purpose he elsewhere declares, "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace bestowed upon me was not in vain." It was thus that he traced up all his attainments and

experiences as a Christian to the abundant grace and mercy of Christ Jesus. First, The mercy of the Saviour was evinced towards Paul in those high attainments which he made in spiritual knowledge. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined into his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ." A spiritual apprehension of the person and glory of the Saviour is the undoubted privilege of every true believer; but there are some Christians who have much more enlarged apprehensions of His moral glory than others, and among this number Paul holds a distinguished place. He was privileged to possess the most vivid perceptions and realizing views of the Saviour's personal and mediatorial glory. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, he was changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The knowledge of the Saviour was pre-eminently precious in his estimation. He accounted all worldly advantages as not to be compared with it: "Yea, doubtless, I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord." Secondly, The mercy of the Saviour was evinced towards Paul in endowing him so abundantly *with the excellent grace of Christian charity*. It was love to Christ and the souls of men that was the grand animating principle of the whole course of his distinguished services and sufferings for the Saviour and for the gospel. It was love that led him forward from victory to victory, from conquest to conquest, that he might rescue the world from the tyranny of the Prince of Darkness. So long as he perceived any territory in our world under the miserable and degrading bondage of superstition and idolatry, with all their attendant abominations, love to the Saviour impelled him forward to the rescue, that sinners might be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. That charity, which he so highly celebrates in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians, was as a living fire in his own bosom. Thirdly, The mercy of Christ was evinced towards Paul *in inspiring him with the excellent grace of humility*; the chief of the apostles was in his own estimation the chief of sinners; the most eminent of all the saints accounted himself less than the least of all saints; the most indefatigable and laborious minister of Christ ascribed all his labours, all his success, and all his gracious attainments, to the abundant mercy of his Lord and Saviour. He cherished a habitual recollection of what he was in his state of ignorance and unbelief; and though Christ had fully and freely forgiven him all his trespasses, yet he could never forgive himself: through the mercy of Christ, he ever entertained the most affecting views of his own unworthiness, and was content to be indebted to the free, rich, and sovereign grace of God for his complete salvation. Fourthly, The mercy of Christ was evinced towards Paul *in the abundant measure of spiritual enjoyment* which he experienced. Religion was not to him as a waste howling wilderness or a land of drought. It was not as wells without water, nor as clouds without rain. It brought with it a present blessedness, a peace that surpassed all understanding. As an advanced and experienced Christian, he reached to very high attainments in spiritual enjoyment. He sat down under

the shadow of the tree of life with great delight, and found its fruit sweet to his taste. He was borne up on the wings of faith and love into the everlasting sunlight of the Divine countenance, and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. He tasted the grapes of Eschol in the wilderness. Through the mercy of Christ, peace, and joy, and consolation were shed abroad in his heart, so that he possessed a present earnest and foretaste of celestial bliss. Thus, through the abundant mercy of Christ Jesus, the Apostle grew in grace, and became an advanced and experienced Christian. "I obtained mercy."

The mercy of Christ was manifested towards Paul in *all those eminent gifts and graces with which he was endowed for the apostolic office*. He was richly endowed with a penetrating and clear understanding. He was pre-eminent for his knowledge of the great mysteries of the kingdom of God. He was probably acquainted beyond all mere men with the great doctrines involved in the glorious scheme of man's redemption. He made known mysteries which, in other ages, were not made known unto the sons of men, showing that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with the Jews, and partakers of the same privileges by the gospel. He grasped truths glorious and God-like, and made known to the Church the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. He was also endowed with magnanimity and true greatness of soul. This must be distinguished from that arrogance, pride, and haughtiness of spirit which too frequently pass for magnanimity. This noble endowment not only consists with true humility of heart, but it is inseparably connected with it. It raises the mind in which it dwells above selfishness, and inspires it with a spirit of sacred patriotism. It led the Apostle not to seek his own things, but the things of Jesus Christ. It raised him superior to the influence of worldly fame, ambition, and wealth, that he might promote the honour of his Lord and Master. It led him to live and do, sacrifice and suffer, if by any means Christ might be glorified, whether in his life or by his death. He was, further, endowed with a fortitude and courage which no danger could appal, and which no difficulties could subdue. Had he been constitutionally a timid person, the prospect of such dangers as those that awaited him in almost every city would have been appalling to sense and terrible even to faith; but he was largely endowed with moral courage, which rendered him bold and decided in the hour of danger and calamity. His constitutional firmness and fortitude were greatly improved and elevated through the mercy of Christ, so that he was more than a conqueror over almost insurmountable evils, through him that loved him and gave himself for him. He was strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. With what heroic fortitude and high decision could he declare, "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Through the mercy of Christ, he was also endowed with ardent zeal and persevering steadfastness. The zeal of God's house

consumed him. It was a pure and ardent flame, which evinced itself in his arduous services and self-denying sacrifices in promoting the glory of Christ and the spread of his religion. It did not burn to consume and destroy his fellow-men, but to enlighten, and purify, and save them. It was enlightened zeal, animated by a sincere and ardent desire to promote God's declarative glory—the honour of his Lord and Master—the salvation of his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh—and the gathering of sinners of the Gentiles to the Saviour. Nor did his zeal become cold by opposition from the world, and by ingratitude and unkindness on the part of some whom he had brought to Christ; but, on the contrary, it led him to persevering steadfastness in his arduous services to promote and advance the interests of the gospel. He was steadfast and unmoveable, alway abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as he knew that his labour should not be in vain in the Lord. Thus was the sovereign and distinguishing mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ evinced towards Paul in all those eminent endowments by which he was so well qualified for the discharge of the duties of his Apostolic office.

The sovereign and distinguishing mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ was evinced towards Paul in *his investiture with the apostleship, and in his great success as a preacher*. This distinguishing mercy of the blessed Saviour was ever regarded with admiration and wonder by the Apostle himself. Accordingly, he declares in the preceding context, "And I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord, who hath enabled me for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." To the same purpose he affirms, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, in reference to the gospel, "Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." In these and similar passages, he dwells with wonder and admiration upon the grace of Christ, in investing him with the dignity and privilege of the apostleship, who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurious person. He thanks Christ Jesus for bestowing such a distinguished honour and privilege upon him; he magnifies his office as a gift of the grace of God; he speaks of it as the result of the effectual working of God's power; and again he celebrates the grace of Christ towards himself in making him a preacher of the unsearchable riches of Christ among the Gentiles. Nor are the circumstances to be overlooked amidst which the Apostle thus admires the grace and mercy of the Saviour in investing him with the sacred office. It was when he was a prisoner of Jesus Christ, —when, for the hope of Israel, he had for several years been bound with a chain, —when he had, for a long course of years, endured trials in this work, the bare mention of which would fill us with amazement. It was in such affecting circumstances as these, when chained to a Roman soldier, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, that we listen to the voice of admiration and thanksgiving coming from his prison, extolling that mercy that had invested him with the apostolic office, in discharging the duties of which he had endured almost unparalleled sufferings, and

been brought a prisoner to Rome. His chains and the house of his prison did not lead him to put a low estimate on his Christian profession, nor on the dignity and privilege of the apostolic office; nor did they abate his admiration of the mercy and grace that had called him to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. He regarded the dignity and distinction of the apostleship as incomparably more honourable and glorious than the empire of the Roman world, and his chains for Christ a far more noble badge of distinction than the diadem of the Cæsars. Paul holds a most distinguished and conspicuous place among the great men of the earth, whose footsteps can be traced in all future ages. His calling lay deep in the heart of God; it held an important place in the purposes of eternity respecting the human family, and it has produced effects which, in point of grandeur and duration, far transcend those of all the heroes and conquerors of the world, whether in ancient or modern times. Where, now, is the empire of an Alexander, a Cæsar, a Napoleon? But the achievements of Paul, as the Apostle of Christ, extend from pole to pole, and are lasting as eternity. His life was eminently significant. He ever felt, and thought, and acted upon this maxim, "No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; whether we live we live unto the Lord; whether we die we die unto the Lord: living or dying we are the Lord's." And his life has been eminently productive of incalculable benefits to the human family in all past ages, and shall continue to bless the generations of men that shall possess the earth in all future times. His was the highest office with which he could be invested on earth; and the great success which crowned his manifold labours and arduous and self-denying services constitute a great and glorious reward. What, says he, is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not ye at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ? His works follow him.

Such, and so great, was the sovereign and distinguishing mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ evinced towards Paul. It was eminently displayed in the regeneration and conversion of such a sinner: in pardoning his guilt, and freeing him from that condemnation to which he was obnoxious on account of sin; in his high attainments as an advanced and experienced Christian; in his spiritual illumination, ardent love, profound humility, and elevated joy; in those gifts and graces with which he was so eminently endowed for his high vocation; and in his investiture with the apostolic office and great success as a preacher.

II. To advert to the design of our Lord Jesus Christ in evincing his sovereign and distinguishing mercy in the conversion and apostleship of Paul. It was that in him Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. It was for the encouragement of sinners of every description, in all future ages, to betake themselves to the blessed Saviour, that they might obtain salvation and eternal life by him. We are not, however, to imagine that this was the only end the Saviour had in view in Paul's conversion, it was only one end amongst many; but it was an end, and a very important one: it settled the question for ever that a sinner of the first rank might be

pardoned, accepted into Divine favour, and saved with an everlasting salvation. "Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy," &c.

The conversion of Paul evinces *the highest degree of patience, long-suffering, and forbearance, on the part of Christ*. In the exercise of patience, he waits to be gracious, he sheathes the glittering sword of vengeance, he restrains his just indignation. In the case of Paul, he evinced the highest possible degree of long-suffering, in order to show how good, how gracious he is. No man could have borne with the rebellions, the provocations, the blasphemies of Paul; no angel in heaven could have endured them; all finite patience would have been long exhausted. It was shown, however, in the case of Paul, that our Lord Jesus can evince any possible degree of patience, and can have mercy on the greatest offenders. In the conversion of Paul, our blessed Lord manifested the greatness of his long-suffering. "Is this the manner of men, O Lord God?"

The conversion of Paul demonstrates, before the whole world, *that a sinner of the first rank has been pardoned, accepted, and saved*. The Apostle claims the very first place on the list of sinners saved by grace. "Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering." Here the Apostle claims the first place among transgressors. It does not denote that he was first in the order of time, but that he was a sinner of the first rank, a notorious criminal, or, as he himself expresses it in the preceding verse, *the chief of sinners*. He was a persecutor, a blasphemer, an injurious person; yet Christ shewed mercy to him, in order that the possibility of pardoning the greatest offender might be demonstrated, and that no one might despair of salvation in coming to God through Christ Jesus.

BRITAIN'S FOREIGN POLICY.

No charge is brought against Secession principles more frequently than that of being "peculiar" and "sectarian." No charge could be more unfounded. It is difficult to understand how any intelligent reader of Scripture can fail to perceive that the duty of covenanting is implied in every Divine precept. Take, for instance, the first commandment of the Decalogue. What is the proper and natural response to it on the part of the child of God? Just—"I will have no other gods but Thee." And what is this, taken in a full and unreserved sense, but personal covenanting? Covenanting is simply the overt act by which the believer declares his resolution to offer himself up "a living sacrifice" unto God; and it is so natural to the spiritually enlightened and regenerated man, that it should not require even to be enjoined on those who rightly appreciate the relation in which they stand to their God and Saviour. A beautiful illustration of the spontaneity that should characterize both public and personal covenanting is recorded in the history of the Jews, after their return from Babylonian captivity. We read* that, when Ezra read the law to the assembled multitude,

* Nehemiah, chap. viii.

and blessed the Lord, "all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground." The Jews, be it observed, were not commanded to engage in this act of covenanting any more than to engage in the act of worship—it was the unprompted impulse of their full hearts that lifted up their hands. And it was an identically similar impulse which produced the scene among our covenanting ancestors in Greyfriars' Churchyard. They felt that their deliverance as a nation from the thralldom of Rome brought them under an eternal debt of gratitude and devotion. They felt that they were not their own, but bought with a price; and they therefore acknowledged their deliverer as their King, and, with uplifted hands, pledged themselves to an undivided allegiance, as individuals and as a people.

The National Covenants were not only religious but political acts. The nation pledged itself, in all its dealings—in its domestic, and in its international affairs—to act with a single eye to the glory of God, and the advancement of His Kingdom. And waiving at present the guilt incurred by neglecting these solemn deeds, it may not be unprofitable to examine briefly the effects that adherence to the pledges they contain would have had on the relations of Britain to Europe and to the world. At present, avowedly, we have no distinct line of policy as a nation. One of the most honest of our statesmen some time ago correctly described our position when he said, that we are joggling on with "measures from time to time suited to the occasion." New difficulties are met with new shifts, fresh emergencies with fresh expedients: our politicians live strictly from hand to mouth; and as to preserving anything like consistency—that seems out of the question. We intervene to prevent Russian aggression on Mahomedan Turkey, but we decline even to remonstrate when the same Russia crushes the heart out of Protestant Hungary; we protest against the cruelties of the Neapolitan Bourbon in the south of Italy, but we wink at the still more atrocious cruelties of Austrian and Papal tyranny in the north of Italy. Now, if the political principles of the Covenanters furnish a consistent policy, applicable to all cases in which we can be legitimately called on to interfere, surely that is no small matter. We will endeavour to show not only that they furnish such a policy, but they furnish the only policy which can be expected to solve the problems that have baffled modern political skill.

What was the triumph over which our covenanting ancestors wept tears of joy? It was that they had escaped the thralldom of superstition and tyranny, and that they had become free in the liberty where-with Christ makes his people free. The rule of Popery and of absolutism means the abnegation of all that constitutes a moral and religious being. The subject of Papal sway must give up his intellect and his will to the priest—he must know sacred things only by and through the priest—he must look to "Mother Church," and not to God, for his rules of faith and life. Spiritual life cannot exist where such a yoke is submitted to, for it consists essentially in communion with God. Hence, when the refuges of lies in which Popery sought to entomb the moral life of our country had been swept away, our

ancestors leaped for joy on finding themselves free to seek God and to serve him, guided only by His Spirit speaking to them through His Word. They found, by experience, that the first necessity of national and spiritual life is liberty of conscience, and they fought for it as men who knew its value.

The principles of Covenanters tell us that individuals and nations have rights conferred on them by God, to interfere with which is treason against his moral government. If it be the duty of a nation, as such, to devote itself to the service of God in all its capacities, and to place the advancement of his kingdom and glory above its chief joy, it must follow that, where the Creator has imparted a duty, he must have conferred a right; and that right must be co-extensive with the duty. Covenanters hold that a nation, as such, is a moral agent as really as an individual. It is admitted on all hands, that no power can warrantably interfere with the free will and free action of an individual, so long as he does not offend against the laws necessary for the protection of the community; and whenever we recognise a nation, as such, as being a moral agent, it follows that no power is entitled to interfere with the freedom of its will and action, so long as it does not offend against the laws necessary for the protection of the community of nations. And all who would interfere with that right not only may, but ought to be resisted to the death; for it is a right conferred on us by our Creator and Lawgiver, and a right essential to the discharge of our highest moral functions.

Taking this principle with us, let us look at the present state of Europe. In Italy we see a people of high aspirations, and of a natural capacity, that, in times past, wielded the empire of the world, now writhing under oppression, burning with hatred, and kept down. How?—by the bayonets of our two allies, France and Austria. Pio Nono and King Ferdinand reign over peoples who regard them as their worst earthly enemies. The former has no means of self-protection that he can call his own, except a few Swiss hirelings, insufficient even to keep down the highwaymen who infest his territories. The latter relies only on his police and his lazzaroni. The former was forced back on his people by French treachery. The latter owes his throne to English infatuation. The foul work committed to a British fleet in the Sicilian waters fifty years ago, shows its legitimate results in the present condition of the Two Sicilies. The banished King, no doubt, promised liberally such things as he thought fitted to mollify English liberals, but only to forget them when the promises had served their purpose; and it remains not the less certain that England had no right to enforce the claims of the Bourbon against the will of the people, and that our having done so leaves us responsible for the barbarous treatment to which the Neapolitans have ever since been subjected—a responsibility of which we cannot acquit ourselves by the petty step of withdrawing our agent at the Neapolitan court.

Looking northwards, we find that in Tuscany, in Parma, in Lombardy, in Venetia, and in the Legations, Austrian military rule is absolute, and that an Austrian army has for some time been menacing Sardinia, the chief political hope of many of the Italian patriots.

Among these patriots are men of whom any land might well be proud. The Government press of our country is in the habit of calling them Socialists and Communists : as regards the sentiments of their leading men, the charge is utterly groundless. The principal of them—Mazzini—is a conscientious and consistent Protestant, and his political principles are purer and nobler than any to be found among the rulers of Britain. The literature of Europe has contained few exposures of the fallacies and immoralities of Communism so effective as have proceeded from his pen. And even the pestilent sophistries of our Bentham have not escaped him. This British master of political economy defines life as being “a search for happiness.” Mazzini quotes this definition only to scout it, along with the many others that would assign “greatness,” and “wealth,” and other temporal results, as the object of life. His own definition is, that politically life should be considered “a mission for the accomplishment of duty,” and to religious truth he points as the exponent of that duty. It is quite true that he appears before us as a revolutionist—as resolved to reach the freedom of Italy, if need be, through the blood of her oppressors. When has human liberty otherwise been wrenched from the grasp of despotism? But as to the practical tendency of Mazzini's ideas, what purer government has been seen in modern times than that over which he presided after the flight of the Pope, and before the French Republic stamped infamy on its fratricidal flag by the bombardment of Rome? Not a single offensive act was committed by the Triumvirs. All their proceedings spoke the calm and the dignity of pure motive and high resolve ; and one of the consequences was, that they commanded a loyalty on the part of the population as enthusiastic as it was unanimous. And Britain—in what light did she regard this newborn child of civil and religious freedom? To our bitter shame be it said, that our Minister, now the Premier of England, advised the Romans to submit to the return of the Pope, and to hope for improvements in the administration of his Holiness, in the way of separating—how, or to what extent, never appeared—the civil from the ecclesiastical dominion of the Vatican. It was better for the Roman Republic to perish heroically as it did than to accept of advice so ignominious. No wonder though France struck the blow which our cowardice and moral treachery invited.

Looking still farther north, are we not warranted in asking why, if it be needful to remonstrate with the King of Naples, it is not seen to be tenfold more needful to remonstrate with the Emperor of Austria. Besides his supporting, instigating, and, in a great measure, directly perpetrating the iniquities under which Italy groans, to what use has the Emperor Francis Joseph turned the power over Hungary that he owes to the legions of Russia? Hungary is to this moment treated as a conquered country. Large bodies of licentious troops are billeted on the unhappy inhabitants, not only living at free quarters, but perpetrating such wanton acts of mischief as breaking up furniture and tearing up floors for firewood. Insults are offered alike to men and women without redress or appeal, and taxation is regulated by the fancy of the taxgatherer. As if all this were not enough, the Emperor

has entered into a Concordat with the Pope, which, if carried out faithfully, will hand over a country practically Protestant to the tender mercies of the Papal agents. Already the priests draw for their private use the revenues of one-fourth of the landed property in the country, some of them having incomes equal to £50,000 sterling of our money per annum. The people, however, are fast beginning to see and feel that they are the invariable victims of every arrangement between military and ecclesiastical despotism; nor does it seem probable that the Austrian trick of playing off one deluded and degraded nationality against another can much longer serve its ancient purpose. The materials of a conflagration have been extensively prepared, and the insolence of the Romish emissaries in Hungary, under the new Concordat, promises to be the spark which shall kindle them into a flame. Then, with Italy in arms on the one side, and Hungary on the other, Austria will find herself between two fires, out of which she is only likely to come shorn of her political power and importance. Then it will be our duty to see to it that we do not repeat the betrayal of the cause of liberty, of which we have been already guilty towards Hungary, but that we speak boldly, and, if need be, strike boldly for that human freedom which is the only effectual bulwark against the aggressions of despotism, and the indispensable preliminary to our progress and wellbeing, spiritual and temporal.

The only other case we will adduce, in illustration of the importance of our principle, is that of the Danubian Principalities. These territories ought, in reality, to be regarded as distinct nationalities. They are connected with Turkey only as having accepted the protection of the Porte—a privilege for which they paid a regulated amount of tribute. But they still framed their own local laws, and regulated their own local affairs. Neither Wallachia nor Moldavia were ever conquered by the Sultan; and Serbia, in a lengthened and bloody struggle, succeeded without assistance in asserting her independence of Turkish authority. It continued to acknowledge the Sultan's suzerainty, but stipulated expressly that any imperial measures affecting Serbia should be arranged in concert with Servian deputies. Though in his extremity he had been compelled to submit to this stipulation, the Sultan studiously evaded its fulfilment, till the victorious march of the Russians across the Balkan enabled them to dictate the humiliating Treaty of Adrianople. The sixth article of that treaty took the Porte bound to respect the self-government of the Servians. It soon became evident, however, that the Russian Government was anxious, not for the liberties of the Servians, but for an excuse to interfere in the affairs of the Principality. Assuming the office of legal protector of Serbia, the Czar gradually increased the extent of his intermeddlings, until the population indignantly resented it by expelling their Prince, who had lent himself to Russian intrigues. This step was taken, of course, with the ready assent of the Porte; but Russia protested, demanding that the leaders of the popular movement should be banished, and that the measures they had carried should be suppressed. Austria, desirous to exercise in Wallachia and Moldavia the powers usurped in Serbia by Russia, supported the latter; and, to the shame of England, Lord

Aberdeen also lent the influence of this country to the Czar—another striking instance of the short-sighted and unprincipled character of the policy of Great Britain. But that the subsequent mutual jealousies and fears of Russia and Austria counteracting each other have enabled the Servians to make a successful stand for their own independence, we should have heard nothing of the noble protest by which the Servians successfully opposed the proposal that an Austrian army should occupy their territory during the war; and, in the miserable condition to which the other two Principalities have been reduced by the Austrian occupation, we have a graphic view of the indignities and outrages from which the Servians thus defended themselves. Here, then, is an important measure of proof that self-government is possible even among the minor nationalities of Europe. The Servians have a hereditary monarchy, limited by a representative system, which, though imperfect, is improving, and they enjoy a pure administration of justice under laws and offices of their own appointing. Surely it would not have been unreasonable to have hoped that, at the close of a war undertaken professedly on behalf of European freedom, Britain should have endeavoured to foster and encourage the Principalities in the career of progress, and to provide, as far as possible, against external interference in their affairs. With strange infatuation, we have done as nearly as may be the opposite, by giving all the Powers who were parties to the Treaty of Paris right to intervene in the Principalities. No doubt, an equal right is given to all the other Powers; but what motive or opportunity can any others of the Powers than Austria or Russia have to interfere? And yet Austria and Russia are the natural foes of the spirit of nationality that we see springing up in the Principalities. They hate it most, for they have most to lose by it. Is it not amazing that statesmen, directing the policy of this free and constitutional country, should have felt themselves warranted in entering upon arrangements affecting the Principalities, without even a pretence of consulting the wishes and interests of peoples whose liberty and safety are as dear to them as ours are to us? Can we wonder that the simple-minded inhabitants of Servia and of Moldo-Wallachia fail to discover any essential difference between the policy of England and that of Russia?

We should never have been involved in such inconsistencies had the statesmen of Britain realized and respected the principle of national duty and national responsibility. Did they see a nation to be really an intelligent moral agent, holding a direct relation to the Supreme, they never could trample rough-shod over the duties implied in that relation. Were they even to regard Britain as responsible before God for the discharge of national duties, corresponding to her national privileges, they could not fail to recognise the same responsibility on the part of other peoples; and they would feel that where there are public responsibilities there must be public rights—that the free will of a nation is as much to be respected as the free will of an individual,—and that we are not entitled to overrule it, unless by some overt act it infringes public justice. Had we remembered this, we could have taken no part in thrusting the Bourbon on Naples, or the Bavarian on

Greece; and so we should have been spared the difficulties and humiliations that have been thrust upon us in both of these quarters. Had we remembered it, we should have been before the world as possessed of at least some measure of political consistency and trustworthiness. But we have not remembered it, and what is the result? Just that we are everywhere disliked, or distrusted, or despised. The Papal countries—not excepting that which, with somewhat gratuitous pride, we claim as our special ally—must always regard us with suspicion and hate, however it may suit temporary purposes to assume the mask of friendship. And even the peoples who concur in hating each other most intensely concur in hating us. Austria regards us as incendiary meddlers in Italian affairs; while Italy regards us as having betrayed her best patriots, and done our worst to blight her brightest hopes. Turkey regards us as the enemy of Mahometan power, for having attempted to introduce reforms inconsistent with Mahometan supremacy; while the Greeks regard us as infidels, who have been supporting Turkish fanaticism and tyranny against the claims of the Greek Church, and of its pope, the Czar. Our policy, in short, having got no principle—no backbone—cannot stand upright, but must crawl on its belly in the dust of expediency and time-serving, and, in the nature of things, can be understood and respected by nobody.

We by no means assume that freedom of thought and action is all that a country requires in order to the discharge of national duty. But we do assert that the attainment of that freedom is a first and important step towards ability to discharge that duty. Striking the chains off a prisoner who has lain under them for years may not be sufficient to enable the enfeebled man to walk; but, unless they are struck off, he never will be able to walk. We must never forget, however, that nations, as well as individuals, need to be regenerated by Divine grace before they can discharge their highest duties and secure their highest interests. Their freedom must be to them not an end but a means—not a something to be used merely for their own temporal purposes and enjoyments, but a trust, for the improvement of which they are solemnly responsible to God. Just as nations arrive at an adequate conception of this great truth, they will approach the principles of our covenanting ancestors; and just as they practically realize these principles, will they place human freedom, human progress, and human wellbeing on their only sound basis.

THE DESIGN OF THE SECESSION TESTIMONY.

THIS paper is taken from the *Westminster Herald*, and we think it peculiarly deserving a place in the *Original Secession Magazine*. It is very gratifying to find brethren on the other side of the Atlantic so faithful, and showing so well that they are able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, and the position which they occupy, as wit-

nesses for the truth and cause of God, in circumstances in so many respects similar to our own.—[Ed. O. S. M.]

"At present," says the writer, "we proceed to notice its *design*" (that is the design of the Secession Testimony.) It is designed as an instrument, by means of which the faithful minority are enabled to follow the Lord fully in their church capacity. We are not only individually bound by our vows to sound faith and righteous practice. The Church is a sworn body, and, in this capacity, is bound to maintain and defend the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in God's cause, and a corresponding practice. The majority's declaration does not free the minority from their sworn obligations in their church capacity.

"In order that they may fully try their vows, they display the banner of a Secession Testimony because of the present truth. This is the rallying point of all good soldiers of Jesus Christ. By this they are recovered from their confusion in consequence of the mutiny of the majority. The general design, therefore, of a Secession Testimony is to bring a faithful minority into a reorganized state, that they may pay their vows and follow the Lord fully as a Church. We shall now proceed to notice more particularly its design.

"1. By means of their Secession Testimony, the minority are enabled fully and faithfully, as a church court, to execute the laws of the Church in censuring the erroneous. By this means the censures of the Church reach the backsliding majority, and all who unite with them in their opposition to the present truth. Such is the pattern before us. In this the errors of the declining majority are recorded. They are admonished and reproved. The minority testify against them. Cannot the censures of the Church go beyond the minority? Is a declining party in the Church placed beyond the reach of her censures as soon as they become the majority? No such defects can ever be found in any of the arrangements of Infinite Wisdom. Individual censures are not the censures of the Church. There must, therefore, be provision made for the censure of the majority by the faithful minority in the capacity of a church court.

"This, however, it is evident, cannot be done in the usual manner. To effect this is one design of a Secession Testimony, which is a judicial act. It is a standing censure until the backsliding majority return to duty.

"2. It is designed to justify the minority in their secession. It clears Seceders from the charge of schism. Thus with the pattern before us. In that we find that they had taught no doctrine except that which was contained in their Confession of Faith. On the moving of the majority they do not immediately withdraw. They explain and admonish for their recovery. It is not until they see that there is no present hope of their reformation, that they withdraw from their communion. They then most faithfully testify for rejected truth. Without such a Testimony, how could Seceders expect to clear themselves of the charge of schism or of being Separatists. With such a Testimony, they stand justified before the Church and the world.

"3. By means of a Secession Testimony, Seceders are enabled faithfully to shine as lights in the world. It is the duty of the Church to exhibit the whole truth in her profession, that all may see and experience the influence of its heavenly rays in all its native purity and brightness—that they may know and walk in the paths of life. 'Ye are the light of the world.' 'Ye shine as lights in the world.'

"Thus did the Church in her Confession of Faith shine. This shining light would still have been sufficient had not a backsliding majority intercepted its rays with their dark clouds of sin and error.

"The minority, however, are in no degree freed from their obligation to exhibit the whole truth in their Standards. They, in a church capacity, therefore, exhibit the truth presently denied in their Secession Testimony, that the whole truth may again appear in its original effulgence, that it may be known and read by all men, and that the Church may be a complete pillar and ground of truth. Thus, by means of a Secession Testimony, are Seceders enabled to pay their vows, and follow the Lord fully, in shining as lights in the world, that the Church may have the benefit of the full light of the sun of righteousness, and that the world may be turned from darkness to light.

"4. By means of a Secession Testimony, Seceders condemn all sin and error for the conviction of all who are opposed to truth and holiness. The whole truth stands in opposition to, and condemns all error. Those who fail, therefore, to testify for the whole truth, fail to condemn all error. A backsliding church is, therefore, not only unfaithful to herself and to her God, but also to the world. She has failed to use the means fully that the wicked and ungodly may be convicted of sin, and snatched as brands out of the fire of everlasting ruin. A faithful minority raise the standard of a Secession Testimony, that they in this respect may be faithful. By it they condemn all error which opposes present truth, for the conviction of all who hold such error. In such a Testimony, we do not only oppose and condemn the world: we testify also against the erroneous majority. Since error in God's professing people is more aggravated than in the world, it is more explicitly expressed in such a Testimony than in the Confession of Faith. Thus, in the pattern before us, the wavering unbelief, and going back of the majority, are particularly recorded.

"5. By means of a Secession Testimony, the minority are enabled faithfully to preserve the purity of the Church, by excluding the erroneous from their communion. It is designed as a test to exclude all who reject present truth. The majority had broken down the hedge, so far as the truths of the Confession of Faith were dropped by them—(Ps. lxxx. 12). In a Secession Testimony, the broken down hedge is rebuilt and secured, that the Lord's vineyard may be most faithfully protected.

"Were the Confession of Faith our only term of communion, how are those, and all such as those from whom we have withdrawn, to be excluded, with all their former errors? They give their assent to the Confession of Faith. We cannot, in a church capacity, ask their particular assent to the doctrines denied by the majority, without our judicial agreement and act with regard to these doctrines. This

agreement and act is just a Secession Testimony. Asking assent to this is making it a term of communion. Without this use of a Secession Testimony, the Secession Church could not continue to maintain her unity and peace as required (1 Cor. i. 10). This unity is broken by the admittance of the erroneous to the communion of the Church. The Churches in Pergamos and Thyatira are severely threatened on account of their indulgence of the erroneous in their communion (Rev. ii. 14, 16-20, 23). To admit such is to give up all the doctrines which they deny. After the reproof, therefore, of the Church in Thyatira, she is commanded (25th)—“But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come.” This rebuke and command in connection show that the admittance and continuance of the erroneous in Church communion is not to hold fast the attainments of the Church. Were a Secession Testimony not a term of communion, it could not be faithfully instrumental in maintaining the purity of the Church. Is it reasonable to suppose that any were admitted to the communion of the Church in the days of the apostles without their assent to the pattern before us?

“6. It is designed to effect the unity of the whole Church. ‘The wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable,’ &c. (James iii. 17). Guided by this heavenly wisdom, Seceders give the purity of the Church their first attention. All the fragments of broken and scattered truth are first collected and placed, in the most beautiful symmetry, in their Secession Testimony. According to the direction of Zion’s King, purity is laid as their foundation-rock

“The next thing in order is to bring the whole Church to this foundation, and unite them upon it ‘as lively stones,’—‘built up a spiritual house.’ On no other foundation will God ever bring his Church to unity and peace. All attempts to unite the Church on any other foundation will terminate a ‘Babel.’ The builders will be scattered with different languages. Other foundations are but sand, which will yield to the fury of the storm. Those, therefore, who do most to bring the whole Church to the whole truth, do most for the promotion of the unity of the Church.

“To effect this unity is the sincere desire and hearty endeavour of every real Seceder. At this they aim in their Secession Testimony. It is their aim in this to have the truth most fully and explicitly expressed, that all may know, love, and embrace the truth as it is in Jesus. Then unity must be the result. All denominations will naturally flow together. No opposition can prevent their embracing each other in unity, peace, and brotherly love.

“7. It is designed to promote fully the prosperity of Zion. ‘Let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.’ Such is the desire of Seceders, and at this they aim in their Secession Testimony. The Church cannot be brought to the highest prosperity without the highest attainments in truth.

“That many weak believers with small attainments reach heaven is not denied. That this should be our chief concern, with regard to God’s people, is admitted. This power should not be our only concern. Their wellbeing, by the way—their spiritual health, strength,

and comfort—is a matter of vast importance. Such prosperity cannot transcend their attainments in truth. The precise amount of truth which will take one to heaven is a secret thing which belongs to God. The amount, however, which is necessary to the highest prosperity of the Church is known. This amount has the same bounds with revealed truth. It is the aim of the Secession Church, in their Secession Testimony, to promote this highest prosperity. It is their aim to bring all to the truth, that the Church may ‘look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.’

“8. It is designed as a means by which Seceders are enabled fully to glorify God. It is the duty of the Church to glorify God in all things to the highest degree of her means and ability.

“They cannot, however, in this go beyond the bounds of their attainments in truth. As the whole truth is essential to the highest prosperity of the Church, so is it with regard to our fully glorifying God. Has God revealed one truth that is not connected with his glory? This no one will answer in the affirmative. The whole truth must, therefore, be professed and maintained, in order to our fully glorifying God. When it is said (John xv. 8) ‘Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit,’ it is not meant that God is not otherwise glorified at all, but that we must bear much fruit if we would fully glorify him. It is only, however, in proportion to the amount of truth which we have ‘hid in our hearts’ that we can bear fruit.

“Truth is the means by which we are enabled so to do. ‘If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ’ (1 Peter iv. 11). But the Church, in her profession, speaks not as the oracles of God fully unless she speaks the whole truth. Nor does she minister according to the ability given unless she maintains the entire attainments of the Church.

“A backsliding majority have dropped part of the attainments. In order to their fully glorifying God, the minority must withdraw and vindicate denied and rejected truth, that they may in their profession, and their holding it fast without wavering, glorify God in all things.

“9. It is designed to transmit all the attainments of the Church, pure and entire, to following generations, that they also may be enabled to pay their vows and follow the Lord fully.

“There is no respect in which our obligations are more binding than in this. Does not nature itself teach us that we should be most deeply concerned to transmit that to our children in which their highest interest are involved? It is Divine command (Ps. lxxvii. 3-7., 2 Tim. ii. 2). We must not only transmit the Bible to our children, but also its true meaning. Neglect in this respect is to rob following generations of their dearest rights. A faithful transmission preserves unity, in testimony bearing, between the different generations of God’s people.

“Failure in the majority releases not the minority from their obligations in this respect. By means of their Secession Testimony they

faithfully transmit the present truth, and consequently the entire attainments of the Church. With regard to such a transmission our fathers have been most faithful. Purified in the furnace of persecution, they came forth as gold.

"To them the truth was more precious than their blood, dearer than their lives. So great was their love for the truth and purity, peace and prosperity of the Church to the end of time, that they cheerfully handed us the attainments of the Church pure and entire from the midst of devouring flames, and sealed their Testimony with their blood.

"We have risen up and called them blessed. We have reaped the fruits of their faithfulness, rejoicing in the full light of truth. To us, in their stead, is now committed the oracles of God—a most sacred trust. We, too, must shortly depart. The Church, however, remains composed of our children. By our instrumentality, these sacred oracles, with their meaning, is to be committed to them.

"Is it not due following generations that we draw the clearest lines of distinction between truth and error, the faithful and erroneous? Neglect here is a most aggravated case of unfaithfulness. The confidence of our children in us is unreserved and unlimited. How easy, therefore, to effect imposition? But how cruelly unjust. That heart must be hard which would not melt into tears on witnessing such robbery against our unsuspecting and confiding children. Would not those whom God would still graciously preserve from error look back with sorrow and shame upon us, their unworthy and unfaithful ancestors? Would they not justly censure us for our neglect in not handing down to them that which is more precious to them than all the treasures of earth? In this respect the pattern before us is most faithful. In our next we expect to notice briefly another portion of God's word, in which this pattern is exhibited, and then draw some inferences from the nature and design of a Secession Testimony."

EXTRACTS.

In the *Westminster Herald*, a paper published weekly, and edited by the Faculty of a college connected with the Associate Synod of North America, after stating a number of things against which Seceders testify (for they are not ashamed of the name of Secession), the paper contained in the number for 19th November last concludes in the following terms, which it would have been good for Seceders on this side the Atlantic to have weighed:—

"Now, let it be remembered that we, as a church, have taken our position in respect to these evils, not for the purpose of distinguishing ourselves, nor of court-ing persecution, but because the law and truth of God require to be held up against them; because, as the light of the world committed and pledged to labour for its re-formation, we are laid under a necessity to assail any and every species of wickedness, whether practised by the individual, or sanctioned by party or sect associated. To use the language of the apostle, 'We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.'

"The Secession Church, by her profession and position, occupies the van of the martialled hosts who are striving to bring the kingdoms of this world into subjection to the Lord and his Christ. Her Testimony lies especially against 'wickedness in high places.' The fact that wickedness occupies *high places*, causes all such as have their part and portion in this present life to quail before it; and those only who believe that God 'has made his first-born more high than kings of any land' can serve in this warfare. We boast not, then, that we are a Reformed Church, but a Reforming Church. Our mission we understand to be Reformation—by holding forth the great principles of righteousness and truth, to repel the errors and vices by which the world has been cursed during the ages that are past. When we find those who have taken their position with us unwilling to confront the evils in question, we say, small as is the Secession in comparison with other churches, as God said to Gideon, 'The people are yet too many.'

"The facts presenting themselves on every hand show that our peculiar principles are in danger: not from external opposition; against this we have borne up successfully, and marched forward with a firm and regular pace. Our danger is at home. Will the ministry sustain our principles? Will our people sustain the ministry? Or will they present such temptations to a course of worldly conformity as, in the event, will prove irresistible—require them to profess these principles, and then proscribe them if they dare to preach them? These are questions of grave importance; calculated to discover the *consistency* both of ministers and people, and to urge us to inquire what is the object of the Church. What, in particular, is the object of the Secession Church, and why are we identified with her?"

RESPONSIBILITY OF DISCIPLINE.

Every member of a church is bound to take an active part in its discipline, and should study to preserve the purity and efficiency of the whole body. When Christians enter into covenant as a church, they agree to watch over each other for mutual edification. And whenever they receive a new member into the church, they require him to walk in conformity with the articles of faith and government adopted by that church, and, on their part, engage to watch over him and seek his edification. In order to this, the duty of Christian watchfulness should be carefully exercised.

What is that duty? It is an act of fraternal affection, whereby one, in the spirit of love, seeks to guard another from error and sin, and to reclaim him if he be taken in a fault. It is not watching with a view to catch one in the wrong; it is not a carping or a tattling spirit, that leads to perpetual fault-finding and perpetual slander. But it is the spirit of brotherly love, exercised by Christians in kindly guardianship over one another, that they may be kept from falling. This spirit does not suspect a brother of being a bad man, and watch him so as to verify that suspicion; but, presuming him to be a good man, it watches *over* him to keep him from harm. If this duty were always performed in the spirit of love, there would seldom be occasion for church discipline.

But cases will arise in which the purity of the church demands that an offender shall be dealt with according to the law of Christ. And whose business is this? That of the pastor, the deacons, the clerk? Not at all. It is not their function to originate cases of discipline. It is your duty—who know of the offence—to apply the remedy. If a brother has erred or fallen, and you know it, *you must go and tell him his fault, and seek to reclaim him*; if he will not hear you, *you must take with you another member of the church*, and if he will not hear you then, *you must tell it to the church*. If, instead of this, you spread reports about him, you become a calumniator; if you know his sin, and do nothing to heal it, then you wrong the church, and become a partaker of his sin.—*Independent.*

SINCERITY.

Sincerity is the most compendious wisdom, and an excellent instrument for the speedy dispatch of business. It creates confidence in those we have to deal with, saves the labour of many inquiries, and brings things to an issue in a few words; it is like travelling in a plain beaten road, which commonly brings a man sooner to his journey's end than by ways in which men often lose themselves. In a word,

whatsoever convenience may be thought to be in falsehood and dissimulation, it is soon over; but the inconvenience of it is perpetual, because it brings a man under an everlasting jealousy and suspicion, so that he is not believed when he speaks truth, nor trusted, perhaps, when he means honestly. When a man has once forfeited the reputation of his integrity, he is set fast, and nothing will then serve his turn, neither truth nor falsehood. And I have often thought that God hath, in his great wisdom, hid from men of false and dishonest minds the wonderful advantages of truth and integrity, to the prosperity even of our worldly affairs. These men are so blinded by their covetousness and ambition, that they cannot look beyond a present advantage, nor forbear to seize upon it, though by ways never so indirect; they cannot see so far as to the remote consequences of a steady integrity, and the vast benefit and advantages which it will bring a man at last. Were but this sort of men wise and clear-sighted enough to discern this, they would be honest out of very knavery—not out of any love to honesty and virtue, but with a crafty design to promote and advance more effectually their own interests; and, therefore, the justice of the Divine Providence hath hid his truest point of wisdom from their eyes, that bad men might not be on equal terms with the just and upright, and serve their own wicked designs by honest and lawful means.—*Tillotson*.

TRUE DOMESTIC HAPPINESS.

Here is *Tertullian's* picture of the domestic life of the early Christians:—"What union like that which connects the Christians in marriage! They have one hope and one aim in their vows—they obey one doctrine and one master. It is a spiritual as well as an outward bond which binds them—they are one spirit as well as one flesh. They read the Holy Scriptures together—they pray together—they fast together—they mentally instruct, exhort, and sustain one another. You see them in company at the church, at the table of the Lord. Distresses, persecutions, joys, and hopes—all are common between them. They conceal nothing from each other. They never shun one another. They can visit without reserve or suspicion. Psalms and hymns resound in their tabernacle, and they emulate each other in the works of Christian love. Christ rejoices at the sight and hearing of such things, and it is to such households that he sends his peace."

ACT FOR A FAST

ADOPTED BY THE

PERTH AND ABERDEEN PRESBYTERY OF UNITED ORIGINAL
SECEDERS.

PERTH, 8d December, 1856.

Which day and place, the Perth and Aberdeen Presbytery of United Original Seceders being met, and, in accordance with the appointment of Synod, having taken into their serious consideration the aspects of Divine Providence, the condition of society, both civil and ecclesiastical, at home and abroad, and their own condition as a witnessing remnant, agreed that, for the following among other reasons, there is a special call at this time for the exercise of Humiliation and Fasting before the Lord our God.

I.—*The tokens of Divine displeasure manifested during the past season, and the harvest in particular.*—While it is cause of thankfulness that this was not general even over Scotland, yet throughout large districts of the country the fruits of the earth were more or less smitten.

Genial warmth for ripening the fields was greatly withheld—the harvest was consequently unusually late in many places. At a critical period, the crops in the most fertile parts of the country were extensively laid by heavy falls of rain. Weather calculated to counteract the damage thus done was but very partially granted afterwards. Rain continued to fall in considerable quantities from week to week, and there was little wind to dry the grain, either on the fields or in the stacks. In consequence of all this, considerable injury has been done to the grain crops; while, along with this, the mysterious disease by which one important part of the earth's produce has been deeply injured for many years past, has been continued this season also. In all this, the hand of God is to be seen, and a reason is furnished for humiliation before Him.

II.—*The unsatisfactory results of the late afflictive war.*—While it is cause of great thankfulness that God has seen meet to command the sword that had been drawn and bathed in the blood of so many thousands to return to its scabbard, there is reason for lamentation that its issues have not been such as to work any marked deliverance in the earth. Whatever the expectations and desires of many in the nation were when this war was entered on, there is great cause to fear that the motives of leading statesmen in embarking in it were not such as God approved. The alliances formed were of a very dubious character, and the events during the progress of the fearful conflict, as well as the final results, so far as these are yet seen, are such as largely to indicate that the Governor among the nations had a controversy with all parties, and that they were the red of righteous judgment in his hand to one another. The yoke of oppression has been taken from no neck, the colossal power of the oppressor remains unbroken, and true liberty is not extended. The expectations entertained that a large measure of civil and religious liberty would be secured throughout the Turkish Empire, in consequence of a certain edict which the Sultan was induced to publish, have, in the mysterious providence of God, been raised only to meet bitter disappointment.

III.—*The alarming aspects of Popery, and the perils of Protestantism, especially on the European continent.*—There is reason to think that Rome has been for some time past fondly cherishing the expectation of having these nations brought again under its dominion, and no reason to doubt that the most subtle devices have been formed, and are being carried into execution, for effecting this consummation—a consummation which every friend of the best interests of the world should earnestly set himself to frustrate. It is cause of thankfulness that for some time past the power and influence of Popery in Ireland have been decreasing; but it is a lamentable fact, that in England, and even Scotland, Popery has made, and is making, progress in various ways. Temples for Anti-Christian worship are rapidly multiplying, and the unhallowed and ensnaring institutions of that system of delusion and wickedness are being extended. It has also acquired a large measure of political influence. The leading statesmen of all

political parties are either disposed to show it favour, or want the courage to brave its displeasure.

As the bitter fruit of establishing Prelacy and the ceremonies of the English Church, which the nation had abjured in the Solemn League and Covenant, Popery, under the form of Puseyism, has sprung up, and spread to such an extent within the pale of the Episcopal Churches, at home and in the British colonies, as to place our precious and dear-bought privileges and liberties, civil and religious, in imminent jeopardy. This is the more alarming when we see the colossal strength in which Popery still exists, and the paramount influence which it exercises over the European continent. There, in close combination with despotism, it is successful in adopting measures and putting forth strenuous efforts, which threaten to deprive the adherents of a degenerated Protestantism of those shreds of liberty which they enjoyed. It is cause of thankfulness that the progress of affairs in the kingdom of Sardinia, and some acts of administration in that of France, are more favourable to the Protestant interests.

IV.—*The moral and religious condition of society, in its civil and ecclesiastical aspects, in our own land.*—The constitution and administration of the nation, as such, are characterised by Erastianism, latitudinarianism, and immorality. They are Erastian in relation to the Established Churches, latitudinarian in giving support indiscriminately to truth and error, Protestantism and Popery. The nation is also, in its public administration, chargeable with the violation of the moral law in various ways. It is so in giving public support to the Anti-Christian system, by which the Second Precept of the Moral Law is perseveringly and grievously violated. It is so, also, in the extensive desecration of the Sabbath, by the running of the mails, and the varied labours of the Post-offices over the whole kingdom, and in the countenance given to railway traffic on that day. Nor can we overlook what is inconsistent with Sabbath sanctification in the conduct of those who fill public and responsible stations in the nation, at home and abroad.

It is matter of deep lamentation that the nation, as such, should be in this condition, and that there should be so little desire shown, or effort made, even by the religious portion of the community, to have these evils removed, and a civil reformation effected. The Established Churches seem content that things should remain as they are; and other denominations of Christians either fold their hands in despair, or are altogether unimpressed with the importance of having the national constitution and administration in harmony with the Word of God.

The condition of the nation in the masses of society is also very deplorable. In the metropolis, in many of the large cities in North as well as South Britain, and also in the rural districts, a large proportion of the inhabitants are living and dying without God and without hope—in the total neglect of the means of grace; another numerous class are very partial in their attendance on Divine ordinances, and are, from Sabbath to Sabbath, engaged in the vain attempt to serve two masters. The land is also deluged with immorality in many forms, and to an

appalling extent. The holy Sabbath is openly profaned by multitudes of all ranks in society—our streets abound with cursing and swearing; intemperance prevails to an alarming extent, and is sapping the foundations of social happiness and temporal prosperity, as well as destroying the souls of men. Covetousness, ambition, and pride have acquired a fearful ascendancy in the hearts of men, by which they are driven to the commission of wickedness in manifold forms—in the adulteration of almost every article of commerce—in the most extensive and systematic frauds, and in the perpetration of the most appalling and revolting murders. May it not be said of us as it was said of ancient Israel, “By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, they break out.” Surely for these things our land should mourn. Mourn! but when shall we mourn? For is it not the fact, that the community is so thoroughly pervaded by a spirit of worldliness, that time to humble ourselves before God for these and other evils is, on the part of many, absolutely refused; and the churches, succumbing to this spirit, appear as if ready to forego the exercise altogether, or, if not, to put it off with a transient hour in the evening, or to appoint its observance on the Lord’s day, when they may serve God with that which costs them nothing.

In society, in its ecclesiastical aspect, there is also much to lament. We would bring no railing accusation against professing Christians, either as individuals or societies. We would rejoice in all the good by which the different parts of the Church in our land are characterised. We would mark with gratitude and satisfaction the measure in which Christian principle and practice are manifested by the members of the different churches—in the home and foreign missionary efforts that are being put forth, and in the philanthropic institutions that are springing up as the fruit of Christian benevolence. But while we see cause to bless God for, and do rejoice in, all this, we cannot hide from our view many causes of lamentation in the spiritual condition of all the churches. There is reason for this in the many divisions in the Church, and in the leading causes of these divisions, which are departures from scriptural attainments in principle and administration on the one hand, and the want of Christian spirit and a desire to attain that unity which is enjoined on Christians in the Word of God on the other. In the greater part of the churches, there is not even an honest, earnest *aim* to have all things in the house of God conformed to the revealed will of her Divine King and Lawgiver. The standard of membership is also generally so low, that the line of demarcation between the Church and the world is nearly obliterated; yea, in some cases, what excludes persons from worldly society, does not shut them out from the fellowship of the Church. Discipline is greatly relaxed, and the laws of Christ as to this are left in abeyance. The neglect of the duties of religion in the family and in secret—the desecration of the Lord’s day in different ways—partial attendance on Divine ordinances, and other evils in the practice of the members of the Church, are *tolerated*. Errors known by the designation of Morisonian, which are just the old Pelagian and Armenian errors resuscitated, with some slight shades of difference,

have sprung up, are being actively propagated, and have more or less leavened churches long distinguished for the publication of a pure gospel.

It is cause of deep lamentation that, by these and other evils, the Holy Spirit has been so provoked, and His influences so restrained, that all the efforts of the various denominations of Christians have not been able to prevent vast masses of the inhabitants of our country from relapsing into a state of heathenism or practical infidelity; and that there is no proportion between the numbers that are from year to year added to this mass of moral ruin and the numbers of those who are reclaimed by the different forms of home missionary effort.

V. The condition of the churches abroad, and of the world at large.—As witnesses for the cause of God, if we are animated by the spirit of our profession, we cannot but feel a lively concern in this throughout the whole Church, and the world in general, to which its interests extend. It is cause of lamentation that, though it is now so long since the commission was issued to go and disciple all nations and preach the gospel to every creature, there yet remains so much land to be possessed. It is very lamentable, also, that extensive regions of our globe, which had once been cultivated as the garden of the Lord, have relapsed into a state little better, and in some cases even worse, than the heathenism from which they were taken. This is the deplorable condition of the wide Anti-Christian community, with its sister in corruption and apostacy, the Eastern or Greek Church, which together number nearly three to one of all the Protestants in the world.

Again, how deeply affecting is it to know that the adherents of Paganism, in its darkest forms, are in proportion to the number of Protestants as five to one; and that the number of the inhabitants of our world who are living in heathen darkness under the delusions of Mahomet, the votaries of Romish superstition and idolatry, and belong to the corrupt Greek Church, are together about nine to one of all that bear the Protestant name. This gives a very dark and mournful picture of the spiritual condition of the world's inhabitants. But this picture will appear still more gloomy, and the religious condition of the inhabitants of our world still more mournful, when we consider the actual state of many of those churches that are called Protestant. Even in Scotland, how many have only a name to live, while dead! In England, great numbers, who belong nominally to the Episcopal Church, are practical infidels or Puseyites; and of other denominations, how certain is it that they are not all Israel who are of Israel. Only a small fragment of the Protestant Church in France adhere to an orthodox creed. In Holland and Switzerland, error of the worst kind has long been dominant. The Protestant Churches in Germany, Reformed as well as Lutheran, are enchained by Erastianism—deeply infected with heresies,—while practical godliness has little place among their ministers or members. In America, there are some bright spots, for which we would bless the Lord. But it is undeniable that some of the larger sections of the Church in the United States have adopted, and are disseminating soul-ruining errors; few of

them hold the views of national religion taught in the Westminster Standards; and the curse of slavery threatens to blight their moral standing as well as that of the civil community.

VI. *Our own condition and circumstances as a witnessing remnant.*—While we readily admit that we have many causes for thanksgiving, we have also many reasons for deep humiliation before the Lord our God. It is cause of wonder and gratitude that, in a late time of very general defection from the profession by which Seceders had so solemnly sworn to abide, so many of the ministers and people were enabled to continue faithful to their vows, and that a banner for the Covenanted Reformation has thus been kept displayed in so many stations scattered over the length and breadth of Scotland, and that it has not been allowed to fall in Ireland. It calls for special thankfulness, as something exceedingly rare in the history of the Church, that, when the older standard-bearers in so many cases succumbed in the conflict, and deserted the standard, a number of young men, of high character, talent, and attainment, rallied around it—that the students in our Theological Seminary took up and stood by the banner that the *Professors* abandoned, and that nearly all these have already been, or are about to be, ordained over congregations. There is special cause, also, to bless the Lord our God for the patience and fortitude, the courage and constancy, with which a number of the Christian people in trying circumstances, when excluded from the places of worship in which they and their fathers had praised God, though they could only obtain a partial supply of public ordinances, have been enabled to cleave to their scriptural and covenanted profession, when those who had often so solemnly commended that profession to them had turned their backs on it.

But, while we would be deeply grateful for these and other tokens of Divine favour to us, we would not be left to overlook, nor without disposition to confess, that with us, even with us, there are many grounds of deep humiliation. Our being a remnant, though smaller than we are, would be no dishonour, but a part of our glory, were we truly imbued with the spirit of witnesses for the cause of God.

It is cause of lamentation that, while our good profession is preserved among us in all its integrity, as it was transmitted to posterity by our covenanting and martyred ancestors and our fathers in the Secession, the spirit of that profession by which our illustrious progenitors were distinguished is greatly wanting. We do not feel as they felt the value and importance of that profession, and how much the glory of God and good of the Church and the world are concerned in it. We are not duly impressed with the honour of the part assigned us as witnesses for despised, opposed, and neglected parts of the truth of God, relating to faith and practice, to the duty of Christians and of nations, and the special claims of God on these covenanted kingdoms, and the ends to be effected by a faithful, courageous, joint, and persevering discharge of the duties belonging to the position we occupy. We do not feel as we ought the degree in which the glory of God and the interests of His cause, for which we are witnesses, are concerned

in all parts of our conduct—in private as well as in public station ; nor are we sufficiently denied to our own things, whether personal or relative, as compared with what relates to the honour and advancement of the great cause, for the preservation and promotion of which we are associated. We do not identify ourselves sufficiently with the adherents of that cause in all places, so as to feel the same interest in their condition and trials as if they were our own. We have a very imperfect estimate of the value of the truths for which we appear, or of the evil of the defections, ecclesiastical and civil, against which we testify ; and we are far from mourning for these as we ought, or being duly impressed with the danger with which they are fraught, and the wrath to which the Church and land are thereby exposed.

By these and other things, we give too much cause for the question, “ What do ye more than others ? ” and we have also grieved and vexed the Holy Spirit, and feel the effects of the great restraint of His influences. However thankful we should be for the things that remain, practical godliness cannot be said to be in a flourishing condition among us. There is not the wonted measure of the spirit of prayer in secret, in the family, or in the social meeting. In some cases, the attendance on public ordinances, even on the Sabbath, is partial—an evil which, when persevered in, ordinarily issues in apostacy. The Sabbath is not so tenderly kept as it was by those in whose footsteps we profess to walk. Parental duties are not so cordially or sedulously performed as they were in better days ; and the blessedness of closely walking with God, in a tender respect to His will in all things, a wise and careful observance of His doings, and in a watchful and diligent use of the various means of fellowship with Him, seems to be very imperfectly realized. As an effect and evidence of all this, it is cause of deep humiliation that, while in our public profession we declare that the duty of renewing our Covenants, in a bond suited to our circumstances, is seasonable at the present time, and, through the Synod, set an example by engaging in this work, this duty has not been engaged in by so much as one congregation since we have been brought into our present reduced circumstances, and in perhaps the greater part of the congregations it has been neglected for many years ; and past experience in the Secession teaches that want of heart for engaging in this God-glorifying and soul-establishing work is one thing which precedes open backsliding from the covenanted cause. It is cause of rejoicing that this work has been lately engaged in by another body of witnesses for the Reformation cause in Ireland, and that active measures have been adopted for proceeding in this work by the Reformed Presbyterians in America. But this only exhibits our inconsistency in a clearer light, seeing we have been so long witnesses for this as a present duty.

And it is to be lamented that, while by ministers and people in general disinterested efforts have been made for the support of the public cause, and a spirit of love and unanimity has prevailed, in some cases a different spirit has manifested itself, greatly calculated to weaken the hands of brethren, and give occasion to the enemies of a witnessing profession to speak reproachfully. This is a token of

God's holy displeasure which we could not overlook if we were to faithfully state the reasons which we have for fasting and humiliation before the Lord.

FOR THESE AND OTHER REASONS more largely stated in the acknowledgement of sins, prefixed to the bond for renewing our solemn Covenants, the Presbytery, in pursuance of the appointment of Synod, call on all the congregations under their inspection to engage in the duty of Humiliation and Fasting, aiming at confessing, with brokenness of heart, our own iniquities, the iniquities of our fathers, and the manifold sins and provocations of the nation, and of the Church at large, in our own and other countries. Let us draw near to Jehovah, who sits between the Cherubim as our God and Father, in the name of his beloved Son, beseeching an abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit on ourselves, as a witnessing remnant, on our ministers and people, courts and congregations, on all the churches in our own and other lands, on the inhabitants of Britain and Ireland, and on all the nations of the earth. Let us entreat the Lord, in the multitude of his mercies and for his name's sake, mightily to purify and extend his Church, causing her to appear in her true character, "the pillar and ground of the truth,"—rendering the law of the house "holiness to the Lord," and making her to glory in her relation to Christ as the bride, the Lamb's wife, and to rejoice in devoting herself to Him in a perpetual covenant never to be forgotten.

Let us plead that He would deepen on our spirits, and on the minds of all who profess to be His people, a sense of obligation to appear openly and perseveringly on the Lord's side, and that He would bring all classes of men in these nations to a lively sense of their sin in breaking covenant with the God of heaven, and of the obligation lying on them as a people whom God has taken into covenant with Himself, to be in all things for Him. Let us pray for wisdom and grace to civil rulers in our land, for counsel and guidance to those in high and responsible stations in these critical times, and that the laws and administration of the British Empire may be made such that its wide extent may be a blessing to the millions who are under its dominion, and a bright pattern for other nations to copy.

Let us put God in remembrance of his promises to the literal seed of Abraham, his friend—to bring back their long spiritual captivity, and graft them in again into their own olive. Let us plead for the speedy fulfilment of the predictions which secure the fall and utter ruin of the mystical Babylon—the overthrow of the power of the Eastern impostor, and the dissipation of his delusions, together with the annihilation of all the Pagan systems of idolatry, and that the name of the Lord may be one in all the earth, and the knowledge of His glory cover it as the waters cover the seas.

Let us pray for the extinction of slavery, and the introduction of the millions of the enslaved to the sweets, not only of civil freedom, but also of that liberty wherewith Christ maketh His people free.

Let us pray that the Lord would bless, as one means of all this, the Testimony for truth and righteousness, in the support of which we are

associated—countenance the dispensation of His ordinances in connection with this banner—bless, multiply, and prosper those who are prosecuting their education with a view to the holy ministry, and put into the hearts of others to devote themselves to this, and of parents to offer, so far as it is their province, their sons to this high and honourable work. Let us pray that the Lord would revive the work of Covenant Renovation, and put into the hearts of ministers and congregations to proceed in this part of the footsteps of the flock of Christ in these lands.

And the Presbytery appoints Thursday, the 15th of January, 1857, to be observed as a day of Fasting and Humiliation throughout the different congregations under their inspection, or such other early day as shall be found most suitable in the different localities by the respective Sessions, and that this Act be read on the Sabbath preceding with suitable exhortations.

AYR MISSION.

ON Wednesday evening, the 26th November, the congregation of United Original Seceders, Ayr, met to take leave of their missionary, the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, previous to his departure for Colmonell, to take the pastoral oversight of the congregation there. The Rev. John Robertson presided, and conducted the opening devotional exercises, after which he gave a touching address, expressive of his mingled feelings of joy and sorrow at Mr Ritchie's departure from Ayr,—joy in now having him for a brother Presbyter, whose experience and counsel would be invaluable in the Church Courts,—sorrow that the Ayr Mission had lost one so well fitted to carry on the work, and himself an able and harmonious coadjutor in the Lord's vineyard here. At the conclusion of his address, he presented Mr Ritchie, in name of the congregation and others, with a purse containing fifteen sovereigns, as a small token of regard for his personal character and appreciation of his valuable services. Mr Ritchie, on accepting the gift, made a feeling and grateful acknowledgement, and expressed the happiness he had enjoyed in the Ayr Mission, and thankfulness to the congregation for various kindnesses received, which were all the more prized, as, like the present instance, they came unexpectedly. While thankful to man, he desired especially to acknowledge the benignant hand of his heavenly Father in all the ways in which he had been led. To illustrate this, he related a number of incidents in his personal history, particularly of dangers encountered in crossing the Pentland Frith, when minister at Kirkwall—dangers that threatened to overwhelm him, but of which he would now say, in the language of the Apostle, "Out of them all the Lord delivered me." He concluded by expressing the fond hope that the mission would still be carried on in the departments of tract distribution and district prayer-meetings, and his earnest prayer that God, in his good time, might send a missionary to feed the poor outcasts with knowledge and understanding.

The Rev. George Rogers, Auchinleck, and some members of the congregation, spoke a few words on the desirableness of continuing the mission work, and then the chairman requested Mr Ritchie to close the meeting with devotional exercises and the Apostolic benediction.

We cannot allow the present opportunity to pass without a word of regret that the Ayr Mission has been deprived of the services of Mr Ritchie, when his efforts were beginning to take effect on the people among whom he laboured, and at a time when, to all appearance, his place cannot be supplied. This is the more to be lamented, as it is the only mission connected with the Synod, and, besides the good it is fitted to accomplish, serves to remove all ground for the taunt that we are opposed to missions. The annual reports which have appeared in our pages bring down the history of this mission to the month of February last. Since that time Mr Ritchie has taken in a still wider range, and visited a locality in Newton, if possible, much more depraved than any part of his original district. His ministrations on Sabbath in Weaver Row, and at New Prestwick, were waited on to the last with becoming regularity, and, in some instances, with evident profit. Particulars, however, will be seen in the annual report, which, we understand, will be sent to this Magazine as hitherto. Our intention, meantime, is to call attention to the fact that good has been accomplished by the mission—that the people are willing, yea anxious, to receive instruction, and that the Ayr congregation will heartily contribute to the work; but a missionary is wanted to carry it on. With such encouragements almost at the very beginning, it will be a pity if the Ayr Mission is allowed to go down for want of an agent. Surely, within the limits of our congregations, some one will rise up, willing to devote himself to the Lord's work—one, we hope, like the "missionary of Kilmany," burning with love to souls, and animated with the grace of God in his heart. Though he may never have gained honours in the schools of men, if taught in the school of Christ, we may expect his visits and prayers to meet with the Divine countenance and blessing. Let us pray to the Lord of the harvest to thrust forth labourers into his harvest.

MEETING OF SYNOD.

THE following is an abstract of the proceedings of the Synod of United Original Seceders, which met in Main's Street Church, Glasgow, on the 28th of October last:—

The Synod was opened with a sermon by the Rev. Archibald Brown, Edinburgh, from Psalm cxxxvii., and verses 5th and 6th,—“If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.” After the Synod was constituted, the Rev. George Stevenson, Kilwinning, was chosen Moderator; and the usual Committees having been appointed, and given in their reports, the Synod proceeded to take up a memorial and petition from certain parties in Aberdeen, desiring to be constituted into a congregation under the jurisdiction of the Synod. The memorial having been read, and commissioners heard in support of it, the following motion was made and agreed to:—That a Commission of Synod,

consisting of Professor Murray, Mr Graham, Mr Rodger, Mr Robertson, and Mr Smellie, together with the members of Perth and Aberdeen Presbytery, be appointed to investigate into all the circumstances connected with this case, and to issue it according to the laws of the Church. The Synod also appointed this Commission to meet for this purpose at Aberdeen, on Tuesday, the 11th day of November, at six o'clock evening, and instructed the Clerk to advertise parties to meet with the Commission at that time,—the extract of the minutes of Synod, for the Session of the Congregation in Aberdeen, to be addressed to the Rev. Mr Aitken. A reference from the Presbytery of Perth and Aberdeen, in regard to the allocation of stipend proposed to be given by the congregation of Aberdeen to Mr Aitken, and the preacher, who has been elected as his colleague and successor, was remitted to the same Commission, appointed to meet at Aberdeen on the 11th of November. Took up a petition from the congregation of Balmullo, anent the granting of a moderation in a call, which was referred to the Synod by the Presbytery of Perth and Aberdeen. The following motion was agreed to:—That the Synod, having heard the petition of the Balmullo congregation anent the settlement of a minister, agreed that, in the peculiar circumstances of that congregation, the Synod shall for the present accept of the terms proposed by the congregation, in regard to pecuniary support; on the understanding that it is not to be esteemed a settled stipend, but a temporary arrangement, and that the Synod shall take steps and make arrangements for supplementing said sum from the Mission Fund or Mutual Assistance Scheme, as they shall see cause, when the call is issued. Proceeded to consider a letter from the Rev. Dr Shaw, Whitburn, with accompanying papers, anent congregational property. The letters and papers were read by the Clerk; and members having expressed their mind on the subject, the following motion was adopted:—That the letter, and accompanying papers, from the Rev. Dr Shaw, Whitburn, concerning congregational property, be held *in retentis*, and the Synod appoint the following members, viz., Mr Manson, Mr Graham, Mr Rodger, and Dr Blakely, as a Committee—Dr Blakely to be convener,—to consider their contents, and report to next meeting of Synod; and that the Clerk be instructed to transmit an extract of this minute to the Rev. Dr Shaw.

The Synod called for the reasons of dissent by Mr Brown against the motion agreed to at last meeting of Synod anent Sabbath Schools, and the answers to these reasons by the Synod's Committee. After lengthened conversation, it was moved and agreed to, that the Clerk, having stated that the reasons of dissent by Mr Brown against the Synod's decision anent Sabbath Schools, had been sent first in June, and then that a second class of reasons had been substituted in September, it was agreed that, in consequence of the lateness and informality in lodging the reasons, the Synod cannot receive them. A representation and petition of the Rev. A. Brown, anent the motion passed by the Synod at its last meeting, in regard to Sabbath Schools, was next read. Mr Brown having craved leave to withdraw the representation, it was moved and agreed to, that, upon the ground that Mr Brown has stated in Court that the representation contains no charges against the Synod, he was allowed to withdraw it. The Synod then took up a reference from the Session of the congregation of Adam Square, Edinburgh, and reasons of dissent by the Rev. A. Brown against a majority of the Session, anent Sabbath Schools. The reference was read, appointing Messrs Lindsay, Gillies, and Brown, commissioners to the Synod, on behalf of the Session. Mr Brown's reasons of dissent, with answers to these reasons by the majority of the Session, were also read. The commissioners from the Session were heard in support of the reference, after which the members of Court put questions to the commissioners. Mr Brown having then addressed the Court, the parties were declared to be removed. After deliberate consideration of the whole case, which occupied the greater part of several sediturns, the following motion was made and adopted:—That, whereas the Synod resolved at its last meeting to encourage Sabbath-school teaching and Home Missionary operations; whereas the Session of Adam Square congregation, Edinburgh, determined to implement the Synod's act, by sanctioning a Sabbath School in connection with that congregation; whereas the Rev. Archibald Brown gave in reasons of dissent from the finding of the Session; whereas these reasons contain sentiments tending to disturb the unity and peace, and mar the edification of the Session and congregation of Adam Square,—it is now resolved, in regard to the reference from the Session, and matters involved in it, that, in the judgement of this Court, Mr Brown's reasons of dissent from the finding of the Session are invalid and vexatious; that they involve grave moral charges against

both Session and Synod ; that they discourage and impede the Session in following out the finding of the Synod at its last meeting ; and that the answers of the Session to Mr Brown's reasons of dissent are, in point of sentiment, in harmony with the decision of Synod anent Sabbath Schools ; the Court, therefore, hereby enjoin Mr Brown, that he shall not in future obstruct the Session and congregation of Adam Square in Sabbath-school teaching and Home Missionary operations, and that he study those things that make for peace, and promote the edification of his congregation. The Moderator, Mr Stevenson, asked leave to mark his dissent from the motion agreed to in this case by the Synod, which was granted.

As the resolution adopted by the Synod, in relation to the reference from the Session of Adam Square congregation anent Sabbath Schools, represented Mr Brown as making moral charges against the Synod, after lengthened discussion, Mr Brown disclaimed having intended to bring moral charges against the Synod in his reasons of dissent given in to the Session of Adam Square, and also disclaimed bringing any such charges now against the Court, whereupon the Synod expressed itself satisfied.

Took up a petition from the congregation of Kilmarnock, for pecuniary aid in the erection of a church, which was read by the Clerk, and Mr John Barr was heard as commissioner in support of the petition. It was moved and agreed to, that the Synod, having taken up the petition from Kilmarnock, soliciting aid from the Synod fund for building a church, agrees that, while the Synod desires to express deep sympathy with the minister and congregation, in having so long maintained their position without a place of worship, it approves of the present resolution to build a church ; and that, as soon as they shall proceed to build, the sum of £50 shall be given from the Synod fund, and that individual congregations be recommended to aid the Kilmarnock brethren in this laudable enterprise. A petition from the congregation of Arbroath for pecuniary assistance was also read, when the following motion was adopted :—The Synod having fully considered the petition from the congregation of Arbroath, anent pecuniary aid in paying off their debt, find that the circumstances of that congregation are more favourable than many others in the body ; but, taking into account the trials through which the congregation has passed, and the discouragements which it has experienced, agree to recommend their brethren in Arbroath to persevere in the maintenance of their principles and position, and, at the same time, desire to express their deepest sympathy with the congregation, and their readiness to aid them in pecuniary matters as soon as they shall take practical steps among themselves for clearing off the debt still resting on their congregational property. The report of the Committee on Rules of Ecclesiastical Procedure having been laid on the table, it was agreed that the report be transmitted to Presbyteries for their suggestions. The Presbytery of Edinburgh asked, and obtained leave, to meet on the first Tuesday of March next. The Synod empowered the Committee on the Student's Fund to draw up interim regulations for making use of the money at their disposal, agreeably to suggestions made in the Synod, and report to next meeting of Synod. Instructed the Presbytery of Glasgow to take charge of the students within their bounds during the winter session of college. The Committee of Supplies having given in their report in regard to the fulfillment of appointments, stated that, with one exception, the appointments had been fulfilled. The Synod instructed the Committee to confer with that party, and report to next meeting of Synod if they shall see cause. Instructed the Presbytery of Perth and Aberdeen to converse with Mr A. M'Lean, student in divinity, with a view to his being taken on trials for licence. Agreed that, at next meeting of Synod, Wednesday shall be observed as a day of fasting and humiliation, and that Mr Manson and Professor Murray be requested to preach on that occasion. The Synod enjoined all the Presbyteries under its inspection to appoint a day of fasting and humiliation within their bounds at as early a period as practicable, and to draw up reasons for the observance of the duty, to be read to the congregations previous to their engaging therein. Mr Manson and Mr Roger were appointed a committee to take charge of the supplies till next meeting of Synod. At the request of the Clerk, Mr Stevenson and Mr Robertson were appointed a committee, to act along with him in preparing an abstract of the proceedings of this meeting of Synod, to be published in the Magazine. After appointing next meeting to be held at Edinburgh, on the Tuesday after the last Sabbath of April, at twelve o'clock noon, and engaging in prayer and praise, the Synod was closed by the Moderator pronouncing the Apostolic benediction.

GENERAL MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

THE KARENS.

THE following account of the Karens is closely connected with the information regarding this remarkable people in our last number, and, at the same time, so interesting, that we scarcely think it will be thought too long. It consists of part of a letter from Captain Ross of the 71st Regiment, inserted in the same periodical to which we are indebted for the former statements.

By many the late Burmese war was esteemed a reckless one; but the great Ruler had good to many to bring out of it, to which the belligerents on neither side had any respect—the satisfying of longing souls who were thirsting for the water of life, and the bringing of many perishing sinners to Christ; and also the furnishing of remarkable proof that his servants are far from labouring in vain where they sow the seed of the Word in tears, because they see little immediate fruit of their toils.

"Before I proceed," says Captain R., "to relate any particulars regarding the progress of the gospel among the Karen tribes in Pegu, it will be better to give your readers some account of the position which these people occupy among the Burmese, as very few, I fear, know how widely these races differ, or the astonishing facts concerning the Karens, which seem to stamp them as a people set apart by God to prepare the way for the advancement of his kingdom in that land.

"From the sources of the Irrawady and Salween rivers, in spurs of the Himalaya range, to Bassein and the most southern corner of the Tenasserim provinces, the Karens are found in almost every district of what was once the Burman Empire,—sometimes very thinly scattered; sometimes, and especially among the mountains, in tribes of considerable strength. They are also found in Siam, though very little is known of their position in that country; and I have lately read the report of an American Protestant missionary in China, stating that far in the interior he had discovered a race of men bearing great resemblance to the Karens in physical features and customs, and especially in their religion. Their existence on the banks of great rivers, and in chains of mountains all running southward from the borders of Thibet, would indicate (what is generally supposed to be the case) that they originally came from that country; and hence it is thought by some who have studied the question, that those seeds of truth contained in their traditions, and which are evidently of biblical origin, reached them in remote ages from Nestorian missionaries, who are known to have found their way deep into Central Asia, and to have been the means of converting to their faith almost whole nations, of whose existence scarcely a tradition survives.

"Deep is the mystery involving the past history of the Karens, but that which makes it to the Christian a problem of the highest interest is their religion. It is entirely traditional; they have no written language, no priests, no temples; they have no government among them even, which might have lent its support to the existence of their simple faith; and yet that faith has survived for unknown ages among a poor, ignorant, and oppressed people, who know not whence they received it, and is as superior to that of the most enlightened heathen nations of the past, as night is from day; for the majesty and holiness which it ascribes to God, and the purity of the morality which it prescribes for men, make it second to no religion which has ever been taught on earth except that of Jesus."

"From a very interesting little volume, called 'The Karen Apostle,' I extract the following translations of a few of the traditions preserved among them, which will give your readers some insight into their faith—

"'God is unchangeable, eternal.'

"'He was in the beginning of the world.'

"'God is perfect in every meritorious attribute.'

"'O my children and grandchildren! The earth is the treading-place of the feet

of God, and heaven is the place where he sits; he sees all things, and we are manifest to him. God is not far off; he is among us. He has only separated himself from us by a single thickness of white; children, it is because men are not upright that they do not see God. The face of God is said to shine continually, like the rays of the sun; and the wicked dare not look straight at him.'

"'God created heaven and earth; he created the sun, the moon, the stars.'

"'He created, again, man. And of what did he create man? He created man at first from the earth.'

"'He created a woman. How did he create a woman? He took a rib out of the man, and created a woman.'

"'He created, again, life. How did he create life? Father God said, in respect to my son and daughter, I love them; I will give them my great life. He took a little piece of his life, breathed into the nostrils of the two persons, and they came to life, and were real human beings.'

"The traditions describe minutely, and correctly as to the main points, the temptation and fall of our first parents, as also the curse which is brought upon their race:—

"'O children and grandchildren! because in the beginning man ate the fruit of the tree of death, poison descends to us, and we all die.'

"With the exception of the fourth commandment, the whole of the moral law is contained in their traditions, and these have, moreover, the following precepts which emphatically stamp their faith with divine origin:—

"'O children and grandchildren! do not be fond of quarrelling and disputing, but love each other. God in heaven looks down upon us, and *if we do not love each other it is the same as if we did not love God.*

"'O children and grandchildren! if a person injure you, let him do what he wishes, and bear all the sufferings he brings upon you with humility. *If an enemy persecute you love him with the heart.*

"'O children and grandchildren! the road that leads to heaven is a tract scarcely discernable, but the road that goes to hell is very great.'

"The above are a few out of many traditions of the Karens, contained in the little work alluded to, which prove how pure must have been the fountain from which their faith originally flowed; it is all the more singular, therefore, that, describing God as a being of infinite holiness, justice, and love, and man as a sinner, doomed to wrath unless he can please God, these traditions should stop short, as it were, with the utterance of truths so momentous, and fail to declare the only truth wanting to harmonise them—the grandest truth in all revelation,—that, 'in this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that *we might live through him!*'"

"But who shall dispute the wisdom of the Most High in his dealings with men? With a little less of the truth than their traditions contain, the poor Karens might have sunk to the lowest level of humanity, ages ago, and lost all traces of it; with a little more, they might have made such progress as to attract the jealousy of their Burmese oppressors, and with it, before they were strong enough for successful resistance, a persecution which might have crushed them as a people for ever.

"'Father God' (as they, too, love to call him) gave them just that amount of light which his infinite wisdom deemed sufficient to preserve them from the idolatry abounding everywhere in the land; and having scattered them throughout its length and breadth, maintained them there as witnesses for himself, till the time should come when they were to be employed as his evangelists, to prepare the way for the preaching of the cross, not only to their poor despised brethren, but to their once haughty and cruel oppressors.

"Some of their traditions relate that in ancient times the Karens enjoyed the favour of God, but lost it on account of their wickedness, when the books of God were taken from them and given to the white foreigners, and they themselves became slaves; that a day of deliverance would come to them, however, which they might look for when white foreigners from beyond the sea should come among them, and preach to them about the eternal God, from the books which the Karens had been deprived of. This belief supported them throughout long ages of oppression, and was doubtless ordained by the Almighty to prevent them from abandoning all independence as a nation, and becoming wholly merged with the Burmese.

"Inexpressible was the astonishment of the missionaries who first penetrated the

jungles around Tavoy and Mergui, after our conquest of the Tenasserim provinces, to find them inhabited by a people of whom they knew little more than the name, but who not only eagerly hailed their arrival as if it had been long expected, but listened to their gospel message as if they really felt it to be 'glad tidings of great joy.'

"The Karens had heard of the arrival of the white foreigners, and that they had conquered their Burmese oppressors, and began to lift up their head in hope that their day of deliverance was come at last; but when they saw the white teachers entering their jungles, and heard them declare from their books the existence of a God whom they knew to be their own, they had no longer any doubts on the subject,—these were the teachers so long promised; they must listen to them and be free! Nothing could exceed their joy in welcoming the missionaries amid their jungle homes, or the eagerness with which they listened to the story of the love of God to men in Christ; and unspeakable was the wonder of these good men at every fresh discovery which they made of the manner in which God had been preparing the way for the triumph of the cross in the land. It was far from a silent wonder, however, for it animated them to the noblest efforts in preaching Christ and him crucified to these poor Karens, and verily they have found their reward.

"It must not be supposed, however, that the Karens embraced Christianity at once, and wherever it was proclaimed to them. Ask yourselves, ye who from infancy have been trained to read the Word of God and call upon him in prayer; ye who have been brought up amid the strongest external religious influences, who have never lived beyond the sound of Sabbath bells, who have never known the want of the happy and holy ordinances of our faith; ask yourselves if these privileges always ensure conviction—if conviction always ensures conversion? Ask yourselves, before you wonder that any poor Karen could remain unconverted, and remember the words of Jesus, 'Woe unto thee, Chorasin, woe unto thee, Bethsaida, for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.'

"Conviction, however, was very general among the Karens, and conversions became very numerous under the liberty, both civil and religious, which they now for the first time enjoyed. By the blessing of God on missionary labours there, his church has now gained so firm a footing in the Tenasserim provinces, that it is independent of foreign aid for all but superintendence, and supplies of Bibles and sound literature; there are numerous Christian congregations supporting their own pastors and schools, and the number of Christian communicants is supposed to be from 70,000 to 80,000."

CHINA.

We give the following statements as to the proofs furnished of the early introduction of Christianity into China, from a speech of the Rev. Mr. Happer, missionary to China, from the Old School Presbyterian Church, in the United States, as reported in the *Westminster Herald* :—

"It is supposed that the Apostle Thomas, after preaching in India, traversed the intermediate countries, and then preached the gospel in China. In the second century of the Christian era, missionaries lived in China, and preached the gospel; and, for the first five centuries, they preached the gospel to the inhabitants of that land. It was one of these missionaries from the churches in Asia who first introduced the culture of the silk-worm into the Western World. He brought the worms in a hollow cane. For three centuries there were 300 missionaries from the Western Church, who preached the gospel without let or hindrance; and the Emperor granted aid to build their churches. The grounds for this is a monument in Western China. This monument has inscribed on it the names and number of the missionaries, churches, &c. It was supposed to be found in the ruins of an ancient Christian church. This monument was regarded as a pious fraud, perpetrated by the Jesuits; but the genuineness of it has been shown beyond cavil. About four years since, one of the missionaries investigated it in the Chinese histories. He sought that class of books among them descriptive of injured monuments.

His search was successful, and he came across a notice of such an inscription having been formed; and this inscription was exactly the same as that given by the Jesuits. It was difficult to suppose that Jesuits could succeed in introducing and fabricating a monument into native authorities. A number of missionaries continued to arrive from the eighth to the thirteenth centuries. After that time a new dynasty succeeded in China. They immediately passed edicts banishing foreigners from the country, and proscribing the doctrines and religion introduced from foreign lands. This dynasty succeeded for 300 years, so that the remains of Christianity which the Nestorians had planted died out. But the Jesuits, who had explored the country, make no mention of having seen traces of Christian churches in it. And, notwithstanding this, it is barely possible that there may yet exist some traditions and remains of that ancient Christianity. On one occasion, after one of our missionaries had closed preaching, a man came to a native Christian, and asked him where he had got his doctrines. He said that was what he had learned. It was found he had not derived his knowledge from the Roman priests. The native Christian did not tell the missionary this at once, so that he was not able to find out anything from this man, as it is supposed he had left the city. It is supposed that this man was descended from one of those Christians who had been converted by the Nestorians.

"After this dynasty had vanished, the Nestorians remained for three centuries. In the thirteenth century, there had been some Roman priests who had travelled overland all the way to propagate their doctrines in China. The first who tried to get into China was F. Xavier. He went with the exploring expeditions of Portugal, as chaplain, to Japan. After he had introduced Romanism into Japan, he endeavoured to introduce it into China. He died on an island near China, called St John; it is situated a little south of the city of Canton. Near the close of the sixteenth century, another missionary succeeded in getting into the city of Canton as chaplain of a Portuguese vessel. He was a very learned man. Soon he was invited to Peking, and, by his skill in the arts and sciences, he gained permission to remain at the capital. This was in the year 1609. He soon gained permission for others of his society to go there also. These men were talented, and soon obtained situations from the government. They gained as one of their proselytes one of the most distinguished men of the country. This man's efforts in the cause of Christianity were further promoted by the baptizing of a distinguished daughter. This woman was very wealthy—she gave all her wealth to the church.

"In the midst of the turmoil of the accession of the present dynasty, the Jesuits gained power—in 1664. Having this power, they endeavoured in every way to get greater influence and higher power, and to extend their system through the country. This aspiring after power caused their overthrow. All the high officers conspired against them, and the succeeding prince banished them all. Then the laws punishing with death all who would embrace Christianity were enacted. And from that time, 1775, till 1844, these laws remained in force. Some of the representatives of Romanism, since that time, suffered martyrdom. During all this time the Jesuits never translated the Scriptures into Chinese. These men were more desirous of power than that they might disseminate the pure gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet they are worthy of imitation in one respect; and that is, that they were willing to suffer death for the propagation of Romanism; but how much more persevering should we be to propagate the blessed doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ? Notwithstanding this long period, the adherents of Romanism remained. How did the Jesuits get access to the country after being excluded from it? It was by concealing that they were foreigners, and dressing in native costume, and stating they were natives. It is stated there are now 300,000 of their adherents in China. It may not be said that they have been more successful than Protestants because they have more adherents, as they have only to turn from the worship of *idols* to the worship of *images*. It is very easy to get them to worship the image of the Virgin Mary and the Cross, while it is hard to get them to worship the Lord, who is a spirit, in spirit and in truth. The laws that prevented Christianity from being introduced into China continued till 1844."

The way in which this law came to be substantially rescinded is—after giving an account of the war which Britain waged against China—next stated, and the present state of matters in relation to missions generally in this extensive empire :—

“ In 1844, the United States, in forming a treaty with China, made a special provision for missionaries, for printing the Bible, establishing schools, &c. After this, France sent a commissioner to China, who made provision for the extension of Romanism. Still the laws punished with death any who embraced Christianity. The Chinese commissioner had no power to abrogate any of the laws of the empire ; but he drew up a memorial to the Emperor, stating that Christianity was the religion of western nations, and that he found that it inculcated love to God, and love to man, and that it was proper that this religion should be tolerated in China. In February, 1845, the late emperor issued an edict, that no subject of the empire should be punished for embracing Christianity, except he was guilty of some crime. Before this time, nearly all the missionaries who had visited China were sent to those who were situated outside the kingdom.

“ Now, we build our churches on the most crowded streets of the most populous cities ; the people come in crowds to our churches ; our schools are filled with pupils. These facilities are increasing every year. While we could not, a few years ago, go further than a distance in which we could return in twenty-four hours, now we can go 300 or 400 miles ; and God will still grant us more facilities for spreading his gospel. These modern missions to China may date from 1844. The missionaries, in the prosecution of their labours, have opened medical hospitals for the natives. When we remember that our blessed Master healed the diseased, is it not a sufficient warrant and authority that we should make use of the means which the knowledge of the medicine places in our hands, and in that way show the benevolence of the gospel ?

“ Some four years since, a project was set on foot to print 1,000,000 copies of the New Testament, to disseminate in China. It was found that, with all the means in the hands of the missionaries, it would take four years to print 1,000,000 copies. And what is 1,000,000 among 365,000,000 ? It is in project to supply every family in this country (the United States) with a copy of the Scriptures ; but for all this vast number of human beings, there is no adequate means for converting them but by the Scriptures.”

The wide field open for missionary labours in this interesting country, and the facilities of free intercourse with the inhabitants, are stated in the following words of Mr Verooman, another American missionary :—

“ I have made another excursion, of about three hundred miles in circuit, nearly all of which was unexplored ground. My way is to hire a boat, get my books and other things, cook, food, &c., all aboard, and then invite my brethren to go with me upon *short notice*. Their preparation seldom lasts more than an hour, and we are off. If they have books, we take them ; the more the better. Rev. C. W. Galliard, and Rev. S. F. Smith, were my companions in this last excursion, which we accomplished in nine days. We distributed over ten thousand copies of Gospels, tracts, and portions of the Old Testament, besides some hundreds of the entire New Testament of Goddard's version. We travelled first north-west, then south, then south-east, east, north, and finally north-east, which brought us back ‘ to the place of beginning.’ Our greatest distance from Canton may not have been more than seventy or eighty miles in an ‘ air line ;’ but, for intersections and windings of water-courses, no other country can compare with that through which we travelled.

“ We visited, at least, sixty villages and towns, never before visited by Protestant missionaries, and passed in sight of a much larger number, which could not, under the circumstances, receive our attention. We sent packages of the Gospels and tracts, however, to many places too far from the river to be visited. Sometimes a ferry, and at others a market boat, full of men, could be hailed, and made the bearer of ‘ good tidings ’ to friends and neighbours sitting in darkness. We entered two

cities, and, in one instance, walked directly into the city hall, and left books for the mayor and judges, who were at the time engaged in the trial of some criminals. Our reception by the people was, almost without exception, pleasant. Occasionally an individual would look sour, but there was not a single instance of opposition during the whole excursion. Several of the places visited contained over one hundred thousand souls, and very few of them less than one thousand. In one instance, standing upon the bank of the river, I counted twenty-five villages, of which only four or five were visited by us. We could not but feel that the harvest was plentiful, and the labourers few. A thousand able men would be required to gather in the harvest of souls now on this ground, and fast falling to perdition. I begin to have a *new desire* since making these excursions,—a desire to try and persuade men to enter and labour here.

In the present aspect of affairs throughout the world there is a very remarkable mixture—it is “neither clear nor dark”—both in the religious and political aspects of society. It is consoling to know that the Most High reigneth, and that his purposes are being carried out, and that in His hand all things are converging to a glorious and blissful future, during which truth and righteousness are to reign triumphant on this earth. We give our readers a glimpse of the phases of society in different countries in the following brief outline of latest information regarding them :—

ENGLAND.—In England, however near and however abundant the means of information, it is difficult to find out the actual strength of parties, either religious or political. Whether the enemies or the friends of true religion, as tested by respect to the Sabbath, are the most numerous or influential is uncertain. That there is dubiety as to this is indicated by the vacillation of the Ministry, who are guided undeniably by expediency—now adopting the views of the one party in their administration on the Sabbath question, and then yielding to the remonstrances of the other. It seems to be equally uncertain whether the Evangelical or Tractarian party are in the ascendant. The Ministers of the Crown are in the meantime extending their patronage to those belonging to the Evangelical party, which is cause of thankfulness. But it is evident that Tractarianism is developing itself more openly, and that its power and influence are very great among the clergy and in the English Universities.

On the one hand, it is satisfactory that the Archbishop of Canterbury has given his decision against Archdeacon Denison; but on the other, it is affecting to see so many sympathising with the views of this noted Tractarian, and entering their formal elaborate protest against the judgment passed regarding his teaching. The extent of Puseyite influence is also apparent in the erection of a kind of theological colleges in different parts of England, in several of which Tractarianism is avowedly taught—at which candidates for office in the Church are to undergo a course of training before they are passed by the Bishop—which seems to be a deeply devised plot for having the future ministry in the Church of England still more extensively subservient to the interests of Romanism.

The following report as to the state of Oxford, as given in a late

number of the *Record*, shows that the aspect of that University is of a most melancholy description :—

"First of all," it is said, "mention should be made of the *confessional*, and the power which it exerts over the minds of Tractarian devotees. It is, of course, very difficult to form even an approximate idea of the numbers who resort to it, since this is a matter which above all others a young man is most likely to keep to himself. But, from the large proportion of those whom I have personally known, I consider that this fearful engine of Popery is doing a work in Oxford which may well make us shudder. Many who intend hereafter to take orders in our Protestant Church; many whose parents far away are hoping better things of Oxford; many whose outward demeanour gives little room for suspicion; and many, too, whose outward conduct shows any thing but true repentance, are at this moment beneath the sway of the confessor, and shaping their lives according to the dictates of a Romish priest in English canonicals. I know this, and I speak of it with pain, because if these men are content to do Rome's work now, they will have little scruples in doing it with a far wider sphere of influence hereafter. The evil is at present a growing one, thanks to the Jesuitical oiliness of that most poisonous tract, '*Directions for First Confession*,' which is at present only privately printed, and cannot be bought, or I should be too glad to expose it more openly. Fathers, mothers, churchmen, beware! Let not your sons be turned into Papists without a struggle.

"A letter is devoted to the question of Sabbath desecration, which the writer appears to think is greatly on the increase. He also refers to the sympathy felt by many of the members of the University with the opponents of the sacred observance of the Sabbath in Parliament, when the question was under discussion in spring."

SPAIN.—In this kingdom the Administration, which had been for a time in the hands of those who were friends of religious liberty, has undergone a great change, and despotism, with priestcraft, are again in power. The consequence of this is that the freedom of the press is put down, and that the advocates of an open Bible and scriptural truth are subjected to bonds and imprisonment, or driven into exile. But while this is the state of matters in the degraded mother country, it is satisfactory that, in the extensive and rising communities on the American Continent that were once under the dominion of Spain, and in which the Spanish language is spoken, there is now an open door for the circulation of the Holy Scriptures in a Spanish translation.

In Spain it has been enacted, among other things, in a decree published on the 2d of November, as follows :—

"The decree allows of no religious controversy, and you will not tolerate any infraction whatever of this rule, nor permit any journal to make any comment upon the holy Catholic and apostolic faith. Nor shall it be permitted to discuss the opportuneness of religious unity.

"According to the *Gaceta* of the 14th November, the Bishop of Segorba and the spiritual governor of the diocese of Tudela have returned thanks to the Queen for the recent measures taken by her government in regard to the Church. 'The accursed heretics and followers of Luther,' says the address, 'will thus learn that the Church, though persecuted, never loses her courage. She may be borne down, but she will speedily arise again with renewed vigour. The Church, as the blessed Leo has said, may not, cannot, and never shall be overcome.'"

BELGIUM.—In this kingdom there is a contest between the Universities and the Popish clergy. The Professors are boldly asserting their independence of the Church of Rome, and impugning her pretensions in such terms as these—

"We say to them," the ecclesiastics, "you neither possess nor teach historical truth, since you are compelled to falsify history to serve the purposes of your Church.

"You do not possess nor teach moral truth, since the first law of moral truth is charity; and the Fourth Lateran Council, presided over by Pope Innocent III.,

proclaimed that it was not only a right, but a duty, to persecute heretics, and that it was impossible to be a good Catholic without receiving and carrying out this principle of the Romish Church.

"You do not possess scientific truth, and do not teach it, since the governors of the Church condemned the system of Copernicus, and persecuted Galileo, who professed it."

GERMANY.—It is melancholy to find that a movement rather extensive throughout the Protestant Churches in this country, corresponding to Puseyism in England, has been proceeding. Under the guise of the revival of discipline—so necessary, were it sought in a right spirit—the Confessional of Popery has been revived.

As to this, the correspondent of the *News of the Churches*, in a letter dated Stuttgart, 17th November, 1856, says—

"It was resolved by these High Lutherans that the public confession and absolution, common in Germany before the solemnization of the communion, ought to be replaced by private confession. Confessionals were, therefore, recommended to be erected at each side of the communion tables, and the people to be carefully instructed in the validity of confession and absolution. It was also advised that pastors should be empowered to withhold absolution from the unworthy, while the decision as to who the unworthy were was to be left in their own hands. The forms recommended were as follow:—After confession of sin is made, the minister is to demand solemnly, 'Do you crave the *holy* absolution, that I may, in the name of Jesus Christ, pronounce to you forgiveness from all your sins? Do you also believe that the absolution pronounced by me is valid in heaven and before God?' Although these decisions at Dresden have not the authority of laws, even in the States from which deputies were sent by the governments, they are likely speedily to be issued as such in many of them."

SWEDEN.—It is cause of thankfulness that in this country, in which persecution has been practised for some time, the King, in his speech at the opening of Parliament on 23d October last, gave utterance to the following sentiments:—

"A toleration, grounded on their own unalterable conviction, and their respect for the spiritual belief of others, characterises the Protestant Church; and, in particular, becomes that people whose hero-king, the great Gustavus Adolphus, with illustrious victories, and at the sacrifice of his own blood, laid the foundation of freedom of thought in central Europe. The statutes which restrict religious liberty, and the free exercise of religious worship, ought, therefore, to disappear, and the common law thus to be brought more into harmony with the aim of the constitutional law (Sect. 16)."

TURKEY.—In this empire, notwithstanding the late edict of the Sultan, persecution still proceeds, with the countenance of the Government, at Constantinople.

ECCLESIASTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

GLASGOW PRESBYTERY.

The Presbytery of United Original Seceders, Glasgow, at its meeting on July 22d, licenced Mr J. Mackay, student, to preach the gospel, as a probationer for the holy ministry, in connection with the Synod of United Original Seceders.

PERTH AND ABERDEEN PRESBYTERY.

CALLS.—At a meeting of the congregation of United Original Seceders, Aber-

* The section is, "The King shall neither coerce, nor allow any one to coerce, the conscience of another, but shall sustain every one in the free exercise of his religion, so far as he does not disturb the peace of the community, or cause public scandal."

deen, held on the 15th of October last, a unanimous call was given to Mr John M'Kay, preacher of the gospel, to be assistant and successor to the Rev. John Aitken, their venerable and highly respected pastor. The Rev. Thomas Manson, Perth, preached and presided on the occasion.

This Court met at Dundee, on the 20th October, when the call, given by the congregation of United Original Seceders, Aberdeen, to Mr John M'Kay, to be colleague and successor to the Rev. John Aitken, was laid on the Presbytery's table, and cordially sustained. Thereafter, it was presented to Mr M'Kay, who, on his acceptance of the same, received the usual subjects for trial prescribed with a view to ordination.

At a meeting of the congregation of United Original Seceders, Coupar-Angus, which took place on the 19th November, a very harmonious call was given to Mr John Barr, preacher of the gospel, to be their pastor. The Rev. William Robertson, Dundee, presided.

The Presbytery met again at Coupar-Angus, on the 19th November, when the call given to Mr John Barr, preacher of the gospel, was laid on the Presbytery's table, and sustained as a regular gospel call. At a subsequent meeting of this Court, held at Dundee, on the 24th November, the call was presented to Mr Barr, who accepted the same, and received the usual trials.

Since their acceptance of the calls presented to them, Mr M'Kay and Mr Barr delivered before the Presbytery part of their trials for ordination; and it is anticipated that the remainder will be given at an early meeting. Their settlement is expected to take place in the end of January, or beginning of February, 1857.

AT THE PRESBYTERY.

INDUCTION AT COLMONELL.—The Ayr Presbytery of United Original Seceders met at Colmonell on the 25th November last, for the purpose of inducting the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, sen., to the pastoral charge of the congregation of United Original Seceders in Colmonell. The Rev. James Smellie, Stranraer, preached the opening sermon, from 2 Thessalonians iii. 1. The Rev. John Robertson, Ayr, presided at the induction, and delivered the charge to the minister and the people; and the Rev. George Stevenson, Kilwinning, concluded the public services with a sermon from 1 Corinthians i. 23. Mr Ritchie afterwards received a hearty welcome from his people. We have to congratulate the people at Colmonell on the occasion of this happy settlement. Not a little credit is due to the session and members of the congregation for the interest and cordiality which they have throughout manifested in regard to it; and we earnestly trust that, by the Divine blessing, Mr Ritchie's labours among them will be crowned with abundant success.

THE GLASGOW CONGREGATION OF ORIGINAL SECEDERS.

The Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, in connection with this congregation, held their Third Annual Social Meeting in the Trades' Hall there, on the evening of the 2d December.—Rev. Professor Murray in the chair. On the platform, besides the speaker, there were several members of Main's Street Church Session, and some of the office-bearers and members of the association—altogether there were 89 present.

Having united in singing the hundredth psalm, the Chairman delivered an eloquent address, on the present political and religious aspect of the times, in which he took a rapid survey of the existing state of matters in these respects in the United States, and in the principal kingdoms of Europe, including Britain, showing that though in the main the prospects for the future were gloomy and ominous—menacing, in the opinion of some—the extinction of civil and political liberty in the States and on the Continent, the annihilation of Protestantism in those countries where it had obtained a *partial* footing, its *overthrow* where established, and the temporary triumph of despotism in religion and politics throughout an extensive portion of Christendom, still there remained many grounds of encouragement and hope—many cheering evidences of vitality and vigour among the friends of the Protestant interest, especially in the British Isles, where there existed a faithful and evangelical band, who were the firm and steady supporters of God's truth and cause, and of the religious rights and privileges of British subjects—conspicuous among whom, for the high scriptural ground which they occupied, flourished a small but distinguished party of Presbyterian Seceders, who boldly and prominently displayed a public banner for

Britain's covenanted cause, and for the truths and doctrines of revelation in all their purity, integrity, and extent.

Mr Alexander Ritchie, student, member of the Association, was then introduced, and delivered an eloquent address on the qualifications necessary to be possessed by Sabbath-school teachers, for the proper discharge of their duties as such. The address was very creditable to Mr Ritchie, both with regard to its composition and delivery. Mr W. E. M. Campbell then proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Murray for his conduct in the chair, and also in consideration of the kindness, amiableness, and other superior excellencies which have so eminently shone forth in his private life, and which he has ever manifested towards all connected with the congregation, by his earnest solicitude in, and unwearied endeavours to promote their welfare and happiness, and for the faithful and praiseworthy manner in which he has all along, throughout his lengthened career as a minister of the gospel, discharged the important and laborious duties devolving on him. The proposal met with a very warm and cordial response, which was briefly acknowledged by Mr Murray.

Having engaged in prayer and praise, the former being conducted by Mr Chalmers, elder, the meeting broke up, all present being highly gratified with the evening's proceedings.

DUNDEE CONGREGATION.

The Association of Young Men for Mutual Improvement, connected with this congregation, held their Fourth Anniversary Meeting on the 25th November last. The meeting was held in Lamb's Temperance Saloon, Reform Street, and almost the entire congregation, old and young, were present, besides a considerable number of friends from other places. The chair was occupied by the Rev. William Robertson, minister of the congregation, who opened the meeting with prayer and praise. From the Annual Report of the Association, we learned that it consists of fourteen members, that they had met forty-five times, and that nineteen essays on religious and ecclesiastical subjects, besides a considerable portion of the Westminster Standards, had been read during the year.

The following Essays were then read to the meeting:—"The Way to be Happy in this World," by Mr Wm. Dunlop; "Connection between Principle and Practice," by Mr James Sands; "The Advantages of Young Men's Improvement Societies, &c.," by Mr David Sands,—all of which displayed very considerable talent, and gave marked evidence of the progress of the Society. The Essays were highly appreciated by the meeting.

The Rev. Mr M'Kay, who had been specially invited, delivered a very learned and highly interesting address, instructive alike to the young men and the meeting generally, which contributed much to the enjoyment of the occasion.

Several addresses were afterwards delivered by the Chairman and members of the congregation, and, after again uniting in devotional exercises, the company broke up, apparently much pleased with the whole proceedings of the evening. We should not omit to notice that the Society is in the course of forming a library in connection with the congregation, to which object they have devoted their funds, besides collecting a large number of valuable works.

PRESENTATION.—A deputation waited upon the Rev. Thomas Manson, Perth, on 21st November last, and, in name of his congregation, presented him with a purse containing twenty sovereigns. On more than one occasion Mr Manson has received tangible tokens of the high estimation in which he is held by the young persons under his care, particularly for his indefatigable efforts to inductrate them with Divine truth, as embodied in our standards. In the present instance, however, an opportunity was afforded the whole congregation to testify their regard; and, considering the fewness of their number, and their external circumstances generally, the sum they were enabled to place in the hands of their pastor is very gratifying. At any season an expression of their attachment so decided and sincere would have greatly tended to cheer and encourage this devoted servant of Christ in the midst of his labours; but proffered as it was, when, by a sudden dispensation of Providence, he was called to mourn over a painful family bereavement, it cannot fail to have a soothing and animating influence upon him: while at sametime, the heartiness and warmth the congregation manifested, the quiet and unostentatious manner in which this mark of esteem was shown, and, indeed, the whole circumstances connected with it, speak alike for pastor and people.

THE
ORIGINAL SECESSION MAGAZINE.

MARCH, 1857.

THE IRISH LORD CHANCELLOR'S DECISION IN THE
TOBERDONY PROPERTY CASE.*

LORD CHANCELLOR.—TUESDAY, THE 10th DAY OF JULY, 1855.

CAUSE PETITION

UNDER THE COURT OF CHANCERY IRELAND REGULATION ACT, 1850,

In the matter of the Right Hon. Abraham Brewster, her Majesty's Attorney-General, at and by the relation of Samuel Craig, Alexander M'Allister, and John Taggart, Petitioners; John Miller and Samuel Nicholl, Respondents.

THE matter of this Petition, coming on the 23d, 24th, and 25th days of April, 1855, to be heard before the Right Hon. the Lord High Chancellor of Ireland, in the presence of counsel learned on both sides, upon opening and debate of the matter, and hearing the said Petition, and affidavit verifying the same—the affidavit of the Respondent, John Miller, filed the 13th day of April, 1854; affidavit of the Rev. John Barnett, filed the 2d day of May, 1854; affidavit of the Rev. Henry Cooke, D.D., filed the 9th day of May, 1854; affidavit of the Rev. Thomas M'Cree, filed the 15th day of May, 1854; affidavit of the Rev. John Edgar, D.D., filed the 17th day of May, 1854; affidavit of the Rev. John Coulter, filed the 20th of May, 1854; affidavit of the Rev. Mathew Murray, filed the 9th day of June, 1854; affidavit of the Rev. George Stephenson, filed the same day; and affidavit of the Rev. John Graham, filed the same day; affidavit of the Rev. George Rodger, filed the 12th day of January, 1855; and the several affidavits of the Rev. John Aitkin, the Rev. Thomas Manson;

* The judgment of the Chancellor of Ireland is here given, partly as what should have a place in the *Original Secession Magazine* intrinsically considered, and partly as a contrast to that of the Scotch Lord Ordinary. The report of the Chancellor's speech was previously given—see Vol. II. p. 337.

and joint affidavit of James Colvin and Cornelius Walker; and joint affidavit of Robert M'Conaghy, Hugh Thompson, and John M'Allister; and joint affidavit of Alexander M'Allister and John Taggart, filed respectively said last-mentioned day; printed copy of the Testimony emitted by the Synod of Original Seceders, met in Edinburgh in the year 1827; Protest of Ministers and Elders, members of the Synod of United Original Seceders, dated 29th April, 1852; Lease of Toberdony Meeting-House, dated 17th August, 1835; further affidavit of the Respondent, John Miller, filed the 28th February, 1855; affidavit of the Rev. James Gibson; like of Samuel Nicholl; and like of Alexander Lyle, filed respectively the same day; affidavit of Charles Douglass, filed the 9th day of March, 1855; affidavit of the Rev. John M'Millen, filed the 15th day of March, 1855; further affidavit of the Rev. Mathew Murray and Rev. George Stephenson, filed the 17th day of April, 1855; affidavit of William M'Conaghy and James Colvin, filed the same day; affidavit of Alexander M'Allister, Archibald M'Allister, and John Thompson, filed the same day; affidavit of James Cochrane and John M'Allister, filed the same day; and affidavit of Alexander M'Allister, filed the same day; Representation and Appeal to the Free Church of Scotland, marked C; Act of Representation and Appeal of the Synod of Original Seceders, marked E; Minutes of Presbytery of Counties of Down and Derry; like of the Session of the Congregation of Toberdony, of 18th April, 1852; volume containing Acts and Declaration of the Free Church of Scotland, authorized Standards, and Documents; as also printed documentary evidence by the Rev. Thomas Manson; an Act for a Fast, dated 1852, and Pastoral Address by the Synod of United Original Seceders—read,—and what was alleged by the said counsel for the parties,—His Lordship did order that the said Petition should stand for judgment, and the same standing this day in his Lordship's list of causes for judgment accordingly: His Lordship doth declare that the Meeting-House of Toberdony, in the Petition mentioned, was built for, and is to be preserved to, the exclusive use and benefit of the congregation of Original Seceders, adhering to all the doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith, as explained in the Testimony emitted by the Synod of Original Seceders, met in Edinburgh in 1827: And it appearing to the Court that the union of Original Seceders—to which the Respondents, John Miller and Samuel Nicholl, were parties—was not a union on the basis of the doctrines mentioned in the lease of 17th August, 1835, within the meaning of the trust: His Lordship doth declare that the said Respondents have, by joining the Free Church of Scotland, disqualified themselves from being trustees of the said lease, and accordingly doth order that they be removed as trustees in the said lease of the 17th August, 1835: And it is further ordered that it be referred to Jeremiah John Murphy, Esq., the Master of this Court, in rotation to appoint three fit and proper persons, being members of the congregation of Original Seceders, adhering to all the doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith, as explained in the Testimony emitted by the Synod of Original Seceders, met in Edinburgh in 1827, to be

trustees of said lease of 17th August, 1835, in the place and stead of the said John Miller and Samuel Nicholl, and the said George Thompson deceased: And it is ordered that the said Respondents, John Miller and Samuel Nicholl, do execute proper deeds of assignment of the said lease to the said trustees when appointed; and in case the parties shall differ as to the frame of the said deed, it is ordered that it be referred to the Master to settle the same: And it is further ordered that the said Respondents be restrained from further interfering in the Meeting-House or the management thereof: And it is ordered that an injunction do issue, if necessary, directed to the Sheriff of the County of Antrim, to put the new trustees, when appointed, in possession of the said Meeting-House: And it is ordered that the Respondents, John Miller and Samuel Nicholl, do pay the Petitioner the costs of this information, including the costs of this hearing, when taxed and ascertained, and that it be referred to one of the Taxing-Masters of this Court to tax the same: And it is ordered that either party be at liberty to apply to the Court if there shall be occasion.

H. SUGDEN, A.R.

LORD ARDMILLAN'S INTERLOCUTOR IN THE THURSO
PROPERTY CASE.

FIRST DIVISION.—JANUARY , 1857.

RECLAIMING NOTE,

JOHN COUPER AND OTHERS, AGAINST LORD ARDMILLAN'S INTERLOCUTOR.

*James Finlay, S.S.C., Reclaimers' Agent. Auld and Chalmers,
W.S., Defenders' Agents. Mr Currie, Clerk.*

EDINBURGH, 20th December, 1856.—The Lord Ordinary having heard counsel for the parties, and made avizandum, and considered the closed record, debate, productions, and whole process, together with Mr Stuart's report—Finds, 1st, That the property of the chapel at Thurso, to which this action relates, is vested in trustees for "the Associate Congregation of Thurso, in connection with the General Associate Synod of Edinburgh," by titles dated in 1795, and that the said Synod, after some changes of name, was, in 1852, represented by "The United Associate Synod of Original Seceders," otherwise called "The Synod of United Original Seceders:" Finds, 2d, That a proposal for union with the Free Church of Scotland was carried by a majority (however small) of the Synod of United Original Seceders on 27th April, 1852, and that a union between the said Synod and the Free Church was entered into on 1st June, 1852: Finds, 3d, That at a meeting of the session of the congregation at Thurso, in connection with the said Synod, held on 2d June, 1852, the proposal for the said

union was carried by a majority of the session, including the minister; and that, at a meeting of the said congregation, held at Thurso on the 7th June, 1852, the resolution to enter into the said union was carried by a majority of the members of the congregation then present: Finds, 4th, That it is now instructed by the report of Mr Stuart, No. 17 of process, that a majority of the said congregation—both a majority of seat-holders, so far as can be ascertained, and a majority of communicants, as ascertained—adhere to the defenders, who maintain the resolution to join the Free Church, adopted at the said congregational meeting: Finds, 5th, That the defenders, thus concurring with the majority of the Synod or governing body, and representing the majority of the session,—the majority at the congregational meeting, and the majority of the whole congregation,—are entitled to retain possession of the chapel at Thurso, unless it is proved that, by the said union with the Free Church of Scotland, they have departed, in some essential point, from the fundamental principles of the body of Seceders with which they were connected: Finds, 6th, That it has not been instructed that, in any essential point, the defenders have departed from the fundamental principles of the said body of Seceders: Therefore, assoilzies the defenders from the conclusions of the action, and decerns: Finds the defenders entitled to expenses, but, under all the circumstances of this case, subject to modification: Allows an account thereof to be given in, and, when lodged, remits the same to the auditor to tax and report.

(Signed) JAS. CRAUFURD.

NOTE.—This is an action of declarator of property in a chapel in Thurso, with conclusions for removing therefrom, and for payment of a sum, in name of rent, for occupation since the 7th of June, 1852. The property was acquired by the congregation in 1795, and the title taken to trustees for the congregation. The defenders are in possession, and, although the numbers are very nearly balanced, it has now been ascertained by the report of Mr Stuart that the defenders represent the majority of the congregation.

The question here raised is one of patrimonial interest in an heritable property. In order to extricate and decide this legal question, and to the effect of regulating, by such decision, the patrimonial interest involved, it becomes necessary to enter on a field of inquiry, which intrinsically, and to other effects, is not appropriate to courts of civil jurisdiction. The question of denominational constitution, or ecclesiastical foundation, is here involved in the question of civil right, as entering into the title to the heritable property which is the subject of this action; and therefore, as matter of fact, and in order to read and apply aright the title to the property, the articles or constitutional standards of the religious body must be considered.

The property of the chapel appears, according to the titles produced, to have been vested in certain "managers and trustees of the Associate Congregation of Thurso, in connection with the General Associate Synod of Edinburgh, and under the ministerial inspection of the Reverend Robert Dowie, minister of the gospel in said congregation,

and the successors in office for the time being, in connection with the said General Synod," and on this title the property now stands. This is a trust for the congregation, and for the congregation as in connection with the General Associate Synod.

After passing through several changes of name, and after forming connections with several different bodies, the "General Associate Synod of Edinburgh," in connection with which the "Associate Congregation of Thurso" was formed, became, and was in 1852, "The Synod of United Original Seceders," and to this body, under this title, the congregation of Thurso was then adherent. The "Synod of United Original Seceders" joined the Free Church in 1852. The kirk-session of the Thurso congregation did, by a majority, and with the minister, follow the majority of the Synod, and also resolve to join the Free Church; and the congregation, summoned to meet in the usual manner, by intimation from the pulpit, did, by a majority of those then present, approve of the proceedings of the Synod, and unite with the Free Church, and an actual majority of the whole congregation adhere to them. The pursuers allege that, by this union, the trust on which the title of the property rests has been perverted—that the minister, the kirk-session, and the now ascertained majority of the congregation, have departed from the principles of its ecclesiastical foundation, and that, therefore, the property of the Church remains with the pursuers. The defenders, on the other hand, allege that, being the majority of the kirk-session, and the majority of the congregation concurring and co-operating with the majority of the Synod, in accordance with the principles of the constitution of their Church, and in maintenance of that connection with the Synod, which is specially set forth in the titles as descriptive of the congregation of Thurso, they have lawfully and effectually united themselves to the Free Church—a body holding, substantially, all the essential principles of their testimony.

The state of the facts in the present case excludes a question which, in some previous cases, has been felt to be attended with difficulty, viz., Whether the trust on which the property stands invested is for the governing body in the Church, and for the congregation so long as adhering to the governing body, or is simply for the congregation? Here the decision of the Synod and the decision of the congregation has been the same. There is between them no collision of interest, and no conflict of right. The union, of which the pursuers complain, has been the act alike of the Synod and of the congregation. The fact of this accordance of opinion and of conduct between the governing body and the particular congregation is an important feature of the present case; and there arises, from this fact, a certain amount of presumption against the averment of essential departure from fundamental principles. The burden of proving that the defenders have, in following the Synod into the Free Church, departed from the principles of the foundation of their own Church, and have thereby forfeited the property held in trust for the congregation, in connection with the Synod, rests on the pursuers.

The result of the authorities, and especially of the decisions in the

cases of *Craigdallie v. Aikman*, in the House of Lords; of *Galbraith v. Smith*, and of *Craigie v. Marshall*, in so far as applicable to this case, appears to be that the adherence of the congregation to the Synod or governing body, though not conclusive, is an important fact, creating a presumption in favour of adherence to the principles of the Church; that the decision of the congregation for the union complained of is an important fact, creating a presumption in favour of such union being according to the principles of the congregation; and that when, as in this case, the connection of the congregation with the Synod is set forth in the titles as descriptive of its ecclesiastical position and character, then the concurrence of the Synod and of the congregation, in the views adopted, and in the act complained of, gives to these presumptions, when combined, a power and value greatly exceeding that of their separate force. That the proceedings of the Synod and of the congregation were adopted by the vote of a narrow majority, and, as regards the Synod, by a majority of one, is a fact which may diminish the force of such presumption in the particular case, but does not destroy it, and does not affect the principle. The pursuers are bound to establish that the majority of this congregation, acting along with, and maintaining their connection with the majority of the Synod, have, notwithstanding, departed from the principles of the foundation in some point so essential as to destroy the identity of the body, and to entitle the pursuers to be considered as the persons for whose use the property was acquired and the trust was constituted. There is no question here, such as arose in *Craigie v. Marshall*, of the right of the Synod to force the congregation into a union with another body of Christians, under penalty of forfeiting the property in case of refusal. This is an attempt by a minority of the congregation to withdraw the property from the minister and the majority, on the ground of forfeiture, alleged to be incurred by following the Synod into union with another body of Christians.

To support such an action, mere verbal distinctions and metaphysical subtleties of difference will not suffice; the departure from original principle, which is to be ascertained by a civil court, and to which the penalty of forfeiture of property is to be attached, must be clear and intelligible, and must be "in an essential point." (See Note of Lord Moncrieff in the second case of *Smith v. Galbraith*, 21st February, 1843, 5 Bell and Murray, 673.) No proof of such difference has been adduced or tendered beyond what may be found in a comparison of the authoritative standards and testimonies of the two Churches, and in the terms of union.

It is important, in entering on this comparison, to bear in mind the relative position of the two bodies, whose union, in 1852, has led to this action. Both streams sprung from the same source; and both Churches have continued, during upwards of a century's division, to refer to that source—their standards of doctrine, discipline, and policy.

The Seceders of 1773,—whom the Synod represented in 1852,—declared, on the occasion of their solemn and well-weighed movement—"We have made a secession from the prevailing party in the Church."—"Our secession is not from the Church of Scotland; we

own her doctrine contained in her Confession of Faith; we observe the received and approved uniformity of worship; we adhere to her Presbyterian government and discipline, according to the Word of God and our solemn Covenant engagements." In accordance with this declaration, these Seceders protested that they still held communion with all who desired with them "to adhere to the principles of the true Presbyterian Covenanted Church of Scotland, in her doctrine, worship, government, and discipline;" and they appealed to "the first free, faithful, and reforming General Assembly of the Church of Scotland." (Protestation of 16th November, 1733, signed by Ebenezer Erskine, William Wilson, Alexander Moncreiff, and James Fisher.) Accordingly, the standards and testimonies of these Seceders have, from 1733, down to the date of the union with the Free Church in 1852, been drawn from the old and pure fountains of "the Church of the first and second Reformation." The doctrinal or evangelical standards are identical. The constitutional principles are the same; and the selection of these principles for special and prominent proclamation is worthy of particular notice, because eminently characteristic. Erskine and the other Seceders in 1733 solemnly and prominently avowed the doctrine of the "Headship of Christ over the Church," and "the appointment by Him, as King and Head of His Spiritual Kingdom, of a government therein, in the hands of church officers distinct from, and not subordinate to, the civil magistrate." They protested against violent settlements, and against lay patronage. They proclaimed their conviction that nations and rulers, as such, are subject to the authority of God, and that, in prosecuting the end of promoting the public good, they are bound to be guided by the Word, and to consult for the glory of God. (Gibb's Display, pp. 156, 158, 159, 311. Testimony of 1827, p. 78.) They protested against the defections of the times, and against errors in doctrine, dealt with too leniently by the Church, and against what they thought "sinful compliances," authorized or permitted by the State. Finally, they specially recognized the obligations of the National Covenant, and of the Solemn League and Covenant, and the duty "of prosecuting the ends thereof" in a right spirit and suitable manner. The celebrated judicial testimony of 1636—following on the personal protest in 1733, and the first or extra-judicial testimony in May, 1734—continued to be the standing testimony of the Secession; and the later testimony, published in 1827, corresponds with it in all material particulars. In the testimony of 1827, the "renewing of our Covenants in a bond suited to the times" is declared to be "a seasonable duty;" but it is explained that this bond shall be taken only "by all such as shall willingly offer themselves," and that "there should be no undue haste in those congregations where it has not been formerly practised." The doctrine or principle in regard to the Covenants, in so far as it can be viewed as entering into the foundation or constitution of the Secession Church, and of this body of "United Original Seceders," is thus stated in both testimonies—that of 1736 and that of 1827—"This Covenant" (the Solemn League and Covenant) "was, for the matter of it, just and warrantable; for the ends, necessary and com-

mendable; and for the time, seasonable." It does not appear that the actual taking of the Covenant has been either by the standards or by the practice of the Original Secession made a term of communion (Gibb's Display, p. 253); and, according to the formula of questions at ordination, the minister is not taken absolutely bound to subscribe or renew the Covenants, but he promises to "prosecute the ends of the Covenants," he owns their obligation, and he acknowledges that "the renewing of them in a bond suited to our circumstances" is a seasonable duty.

The other party to the union now complained of was the Free Church of Scotland. That body of Christians separated from the Established Church of Scotland in 1843. The grounds of separation are set forth in the claim of right of 30th May, 1842, and in the protest of 18th May, 1843. It is only necessary here to say, in regard to them, that these grounds were not considered by the Free Church as involving any departure from the doctrine, discipline, and fundamental principles of the Church of Scotland; and that the protesting ministers and elders, in 1843, who formed the Free Church, explicitly avowed, as the Seceders of 1783 had done, their purpose of "maintaining the Confession of Faith and standards of the Church of Scotland as heretofore understood." In the recognition of the standards of the Church—in the reference to the periods of the first and second Reformation as the best periods of the Church's history—in the resistance of violent settlements, and the refusal to intrude ministers on reclaiming congregations—in recognizing the duty of the civil magistrate to be guided by religious considerations, and to seek religious ends—in the solemn and emphatic declaration of the Headship of Christ, and the independent spiritual jurisdiction of the Church—and in the selection of principles for special and prominent proclamation,—the Free Church appears to the Lord Ordinary to occupy the same ground as the Synod of Original Seceders. No difference whatever in doctrine, and no intelligible and essential difference in principle, has been established by the pursuers; and, indeed, no such difference has been seriously alleged, except in regard to the recognition of the Covenants, which has been ably and ingeniously urged as a point of essential and fundamental difference.

The Lord Ordinary does not think that, in regard to the matter of the Covenants—the ends of the Covenants, or the seasonableness of the Covenants to the times when they were framed and subscribed—there is any difference whatever. These Covenants are not exclusively, or even peculiarly, the muniments of the Secession; they are the testimonies and pledges of the Church of Scotland before there was any secession; and they are still held in veneration by all bodies of Presbyterians within and without the Establishment. It may be that, abstractly, the descending obligation of the Covenants, apart from the ends and the matter thereof, was more fully recognized and more highly estimated by the Secession Church than by the Established Church or by the Free Church. But the obligation, even in its abstract form, was not formally repudiated or denied by the Free Church; and in its practical form, as connected with the matter and

the ends of the Covenants, the obligation to prosecute those ends by all lawful means is distinctly acknowledged and avowed by the Free Church, and is set forth in the incorporating Act of Union. The prosecution of these ends by means other than lawful, cannot, by a court of law, be recognised as a principle of any Church, and the prosecution of them by lawful means is acknowledged to be the duty of both the Churches, parties to this union. The distinction between a body which recognises covenant obligations, because the matter is just and warrantable, the ends necessary and commendable, and the time seasonable, and a body which maintains the same obligations, as inherently and perpetually binding, apart from considerations of matter, ends, and time, is too subtle to be relied on in a court of law as a ground for inferring a forfeiture of property. But even this subtle distinction does not exist to the full extent contended for by the pursuers. The descending force, or perpetual binding power of the Covenants, taken apart from the matter and ends thereof, has never been authoritatively proclaimed by the Secession as a principle of foundation, or a term of communion; the provision made for renewal of the Covenants, by persons willingly offering themselves, seems scarcely consistent with an absolute and perpetual obligation, requiring no renewal, but constantly binding by its descending force without regard to its ends; and the subscribing of the Covenants has never been enforced as an inflexible duty, apart from suitableness of time and circumstances.

The testimony of 1827 was republished in 1842, on the occasion of the union of the Original Seceders with the Original Burghers, "with certain alterations rendered necessary by the union;" and this testimony was thereafter that of the "United Original Seceders," and was in force in 1852. In that document the views of the Original Seceders, in regard to the Covenants, are, in all essential particulars, the same as in the representation and appeal presented by the Synod to the Free Church in 1852, and forming the basis of union.

It has also been urged by the pursuers, as a further but subordinate ground of difference, that the two Churches differ in their estimate of the Revolution Settlement, and of the union with England; and it appears that the Free Church, in her historical retrospect, does take a more favourable view of both of these events than the Seceders. But both bodies now actually and sincerely acknowledge these settlements, with, it may be, some little qualification about shortcomings in matters ecclesiastical; and a slight difference of opinion in regard to the degree of acknowledgement, or the degree of qualification, cannot be viewed as a point essential or fundamental.

Such being the position of these two religious bodies, it occurred to themselves that there was no good reason why they should continue to be divided; and accordingly, the Synod of United Original Seceders, standing on the foundation above explained, made to the Free Church, in 1852, a proposal for union. They considered that the Free Church, though now a body of nonconformists like themselves, did yet historically and constitutionally represent those from whom they had been separated, and to whom they were pledged to return;

and to the Free Church they presented the appeal which their fathers had taken in 1733, to "the first free, faithful, and reforming General Assembly of the Church of Scotland." The General Assembly of the Free Church took the same view of the relative position of the parties: they agreed to the proposal for union; and on the footing that the standards and principles of the two Churches were consistent, the union was formally and solemnly completed.

Whether the view so taken of the position of both Churches, and of their historical and representative character as spiritual institutions, was in all respects correct, and especially in regard to the selection of the Free Church as the body to which the Seceders should return, it is not necessary here to inquire; and on that point the Lord Ordinary expresses no judicial opinion. It was, however, the opinion of the contracting parties, and they deliberately acted on it; and the question is,—Whether there is such essential difference of standards and fundamental principles as to attach to the act of union the penalty of forfeiting the property dedicated to the use of this Secession congregation? The Seceders, if they had thought fit, might have reunited themselves to the Established Church at any period during the century of their estrangement; for, as they were not Seceders from the doctrines of the Church, a change of policy and constitutional practice might have removed the causes of separation. Had they so returned, a similar question would then have arisen, and it would have been necessary to inquire whether the grounds of secession had been so removed as to render the return of the Seceders consistent with their avowed principles. The original character of the Secession Church was not that of perpetual separation. The fathers of the Secession, and their representatives in the Synod, have borne about with them that standing protest and pledge of return, which marked them as exiles rather than aliens. Every congregation of the body contemplated the possibility of such return; and at length the governing body entered into a union with the Free Church, in the belief, and on the footing, of consistency in standards, discipline, and principles, and as a step which was, in their opinion, equivalent to the return from exile. The majority of the session and of the congregation at Thurso followed the Synod; and, in doing so, preserved the connection which is set forth in the title to the property. If the pursuers had established that this union involved a departure, on any essential point, from the fundamental principles of the Original Secession, the Lord Ordinary would have held such departure to be sufficient ground for inferring forfeiture of the property. But, after careful examination of the standards and testimonies of both Churches, and of the terms of union in 1852, he is of opinion that no departure from the essential principles of the Original Seceders is involved in the union. The terms of incorporation are so framed as to distinguish between what is essential and what is accidental. The liberty which is permitted in regard to the manner of the testimony is quite consistent with unity in recognition of its matter, and unity in prosecution of its ends.

The Lord Ordinary is aware that a decision in reference to this union of 1852 has been recently pronounced in the Court of Chancery

in Ireland, in the case of the *Attorney-General v. Miller*, known as the "Toberdony" case. In that case, the minister and the minority of the congregation joined the Free Church, and the majority claimed the property; and the question was disposed of chiefly on a comparison of conflicting parole evidence of opinion in regard to the harmony or difference of the standards of the respective Churches—a mode of solution which has not been here resorted to. The Lord Chancellor of Ireland decided the case in favour of the majority of the congregation. It does rather appear from notes of his speech, furnished to the Lord Ordinary, that his decision would have been the same if the action had been brought by a minority; and in this view the authority has been urged by the pursuers. To this decision, and the observations which accompanied it, the Lord Ordinary has directed his anxious and respectful consideration. It cannot be otherwise than with diffidence that he expresses a different opinion; but, dealing with this case according to the best of his judgment—having regard to the terms of the titles, and to the concurrence of the majority of the congregation with the majority of the Synod, and bearing in mind the similarity of the causes of both secessions—the steadfast adherence by both Churches to the old standards of the Church of Scotland—the absolute identity in evangelical doctrine—the striking general harmony of the testimonies of both bodies—and the failure of the pursuers, as he thinks, to prove departure from the foundation on any essential point,—he is constrained to adopt the conclusion that the property of this chapel has not been forfeited by the defenders.

(Initialed) J. C.

REMARKS ON LORD ARDMILLAN'S INTERLOCUTOR AND NOTE IN THE THURSO PROPERTY CASE.

It is readily admitted that the Lord Ordinary had a difficult task to execute in forming a decision in this case. Apart from the complexity of the case, and the mass of conflicting statements which had to be examined, there were formidable obstacles to surmount, which rendered it necessary that his Lordship should possess force of character, in order that he might arrive at an impartial judgment in the case brought before him.* There is strong presumptive evidence that he had to

* It is indeed with much reluctance that we have entered on this investigation, feeling, as we do, that it is something like an unwarrantable approach within the precincts of justice. We have great confidence in the integrity of our courts of law, civil and criminal; and it is no trifling matter that could induce us to throw the slightest shade of suspicion on the conduct of any one occupying a position which ought to be beyond every influence but that of an unbending regard to truth and justice. Judges, however, are but men, and the best men and the best judges may be biassed and fall into error; and we do not see, if a criminal is allowed the privilege of challenging any members of his jury he may consider interested parties, why the decision of a judge on the bench may not be criticised, if it can be shown that he was surrounded by influences, and gave evidence of having yielded to them, which necessarily led to a certain result. Whether such was the position of Lord Ardmillan, in the case now under consideration, we leave the facts and circumstances hereafter stated to testify.

grapple with very decided prejudices in favour of the one party, and against the other. Lord Ardmillan, the judge in this case, is a zealous member and office-bearer of the Free Church, and has taken an intense interest in her affairs. The one party pleading at his bar were not only Free Churchmen, but their leading arguments in defence of their cause all conspired to exalt the Free Church, and were couched in terms that could not fail to be very grateful to the ears of the friends of that Church; the other party had, in defence of their cause, to make statements which were not flattering to the character and moral standing of the Free Church, and which, placed in contrast, as they necessarily were, with the laudations of the other party, were liable to wound the feelings of a Free Churchman cherishing the most fervent sentiments of respect for his Church. Lord Ardmillan is also a member of the Session of Free St George's, and, we believe, a personal and an esteemed friend of the Rev. Dr Candlish, who had taken the most active part in forming the union complained of—who, ere formal steps were taken in this matter, had pledged himself that none of the Original Secession ministers should be left to be losers, in a temporal respect, in acceding to the Free Church—who acted the part of a keen partizan, in loading the parties who joined the Free Church with unmeasured praises, and did what in him lay to disparage and even ignore the Original Seceders, who, in fidelity to their vows and engagements, held fast their principles, and whose judgment and conscience compelled them to reject the terms on which the union with the Free Church was formed. It will also be remarked that this Free Church leader had, at different times and in divers forms, given utterance to the very sentiments which have been here reiterated by the Lord Ordinary in his elaborate, or, as the Irish Chancellor, we think, would have designated it, “casuistical” Note.

There was, no doubt, a possibility that Lord Ardmillan would have reasoned with himself in the following strain:—“This is a case by which my character as an upright, conscientious, and impartial judge will be severely tested. The one party is connected with a powerful and influential Church; the other with a small despised remnant. I am also conscious that all my personal feelings are with the powerful party—in fact, it is in a manner my own cause that they advocate,—while that of the other is antagonistic to my feelings of self-esteem as a Free Churchman, and the pleadings in their behalf are in no small danger of arousing my antipathies so as to render me the keen advocate of the one from the seat of judgment, and against the other. There is a special call, therefore, to keep a firm rein on all my emotional feelings—to watch carefully against every bias from personal or relative considerations,—and to keep my eye, as a judge, solely on the right and the true in the determinations to which I come.”

As it was understood that Lord Ardmillan was a religious and intelligent Free Churchman, and could not, therefore, but be aware that the Free Church did not hold the principles which formed the distinguishing part of the religious Profession of Seceders, some did think that the case would have been safe in his hands, and that he possessed a strength of principle that would have enabled him to rise

above all party considerations and feelings. This expectation, however, has been doomed to disappointment. And as there was a large amount of *a priori* evidence that the Lord Ordinary in this case would be very strongly biassed and influenced by his feelings and ecclesiastical connection, this is amply confirmed by evidence of an *a posteriori* kind in the course of the proceedings, and especially in the final Decision and long apologetic Note appended to the Interlocutor.

It would take a volume fully to discuss all that calls for animadversion on the part of the Lord Ordinary in this case; but our space being limited to a few pages, compels us to rest in giving some instances of the proof furnished, in different ways, of the party spirit which animated the Judge throughout this process.

Indications of this partial bias were given, in various ways, in the progress of the debate. The following instance may suffice as a proof of the *animus* manifested by the judge in the course of the debate:—In the report of Mr Penney's speech (*Mag.* vol. II. p. 424), it appears that, after he had shown that the principles of the Secession Church and those of the Free Church differed in relation to the terms of the incorporating union with England, by which Scotland, in violation of the Solemn League and Covenant, gave its consent to the perpetual establishment of Prelacy in England, Lord Ardmillan interrupted the learned gentleman, Mr Penney, with the questions, "Was Dr M'Crie a member of that Church? and if so, was he bound to advocate a repeal of the union and the subversion of Prelacy?" and added, "If he was, his published opinions are adverse to such opinions."

It is remarkable, 1st, That this is an after-thought taken up by the judge when Mr Penney had fully entered on a different part of the subject; 2d, That he puts a construction on the words of the Original Secession Testimony which they do not warrant—as binding Seceders to agitate for a repeal of the union in the odious form in which this has been advocated by demagogues in relation to the Union of Ireland,—whereas it only condemns the union in so far as the perpetual establishment of Prelacy in England was thereby homologated and countenanced; 3d, That he asserts that the published opinions of Dr M'Crie were different from the Testimony on this subject. His Lordship is thus chargeable with misrepresenting the meaning of the Secession Testimony—with throwing reproach on the memory of one of the most venerated names in Scottish history, and making a groundless assertion regarding a matter of which he was, to say the least, but very partially informed. For what are the facts? 1st, That Dr M'Crie drew up with his own hand the part of the Testimony referred to; and 2d, That the opinions expressed in his published writings are equally definite and strong on the subject. His words in his Appendix to Sermons on Unity, p. 122, are, "they (Seceders) condemned not only the series of wicked laws passed at the Restoration, but also various evils in the Revolution Settlement and in the *Incorporating Union*, by the fundamental articles of which Scotland was more deeply involved in perjury, by giving her consent to the maintenance of the hierarchy and ceremonies of the Church of England."

The next instance which we shall adduce here of this bias—uncon-

scious, it may be, on the part of the judge—is the announcement which he is reported to have made conditionally of the judgment which he would give in the case. It was in words to the following effect:—If, said the Lord Ordinary, it shall be found that the majority is with the party who have joined the Free Church, then I will decide in their favour; but if the majority shall be found with the other party, I will not say what decision I shall give. In the one case, the mind of the judge was made up to give *his* party—as we may call the Free Church party—the full advantages of their majority; but in the other, he cautiously refrained from saying that he would give Original Seceders the benefit of their majority, should it be found that they were the larger party.

There is some reason, also, to think that the instructions given to Mr Stuart—by which he was to be guided in determining to which party the majority belonged—were framed under the same partial bias. They must have been strange instructions by which Mr Stuart—who seems to have acted impartially—felt himself constrained to put down four of the pursuers or Original Secession party, and one of these the leading pursuer, as neutral, and two of the actual pursuers as belonging to the Free Church party.

The most objectionable part of the instructions to the commissioner, Mr Stuart, seems to be the date fixed—viz., the 7th of June, 1852,—as the time at which the adherents of each party were to be determined. This gave great advantage to the Free Church party, through the confusion produced by an irregularly called meeting of the congregation, the undue means used at that meeting, as pointed out in articles 13th and 14th of the condescendence, and the comparative ignorance in which the congregation was kept of the great questions at issue. Lord Ardmillan, indeed (p. 3), affirms that the congregation was “summoned to meet in the usual manner, by intimation from the pulpit,” on the 7th day of June. He thus speaks of it as if it were a regularly called meeting, though he had no doubt read and re-read the statements in the closed record regarding its irregularity. The usual rule, in cases in which matters of importance were to be discussed, was that *ten free days* should be given between the intimation and the time of meeting; whereas in this case, in which matters of deeper interest to the congregation than any that had ever been brought before a meeting of the congregation since it existed, there was not so much as *one free day* given, though the congregation were scattered over a district of country so wide that several of them were upwards of twenty miles from the place of meeting. Though the meeting was intimated from the pulpit, it was unprecedentedly *irregular*; and yet the majority, forsooth, must be determined by the number of adherents to each party as at this date—a date that might be recoiled from with shame by those who then carried matters with so high a hand.

Many other things of the same kind might have been adverted to; but some of them will come out in discussing the merits of the Lord Ordinary's judgment—to which we hasten.

And we shall begin with the *majority*, on which the Lord Ordinary rings the changes in his Interlocutor and Note, and which, indeed, is made the principal basis of his judgment.

He dwells on, and reiterates, "the majority of the Synod, the majority of the Session, and the actual majority of the whole congregation," as being in favour of the Free Church party. Now, it so happens that, in all the cases, this heralded majority was that of *one*. Surely this was a very slippery foundation for a judge to rest his decision on. For who does not know by what a slight incident this majority might be given to the one side or the other.

In this case, it could be proved that the majority of *one* in the Synod was obtained by illegal votes; though, to avoid exasperation and the excitement of evil passions, when the most solemn questions were under discussion, the irregularity was winked at when it took place. One elder voted, the validity of whose election was called in question by a representation lying on the Synod's table undisposed of, and, moreover, who had been absent during the greater part of the discussion, only coming in at the close of a debate which had occupied several previous sittings; and another party voted, though a charge affecting his moral character had been presented against him to the Synod, and still remained for judgment. The majority of the Session, again, was that of the casting vote of the moderator; and an elder, who is one of the pursuers, was absent, so that the actual majority of the elders adhered to the Original Seceders; and we have already seen how the congregational majority was obtained.

The Lord Ordinary says "that the proceedings of the Synod and of the congregation, being adopted by the vote of a narrow majority, is a fact that may diminish the force of the presumption in the particular case, but does not destroy it, and does not affect the principle." We may ask what principle? Is it really a principle, that, in ecclesiastical bodies, there is a presumption that the majority of these bodies are more likely to be found adhering to the original principles, for the support of which they were associated, than the minority? Does the past history of the Church furnish data for converting such a conclusion into a principle? Were the majority the faithful party in the days of Noah, of Elijah, or of Jeremiah? Were they so in the days of Popish domination, when "all the world wondered after the beast," and the faithful party were only "two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth?" Yea, we might ask his Lordship to adduce one instance in which the minority in a church have proceeded in a course of defection from their principles while the majority stood by them? The fact is, that it is not till the defecting party become the majority that such a course can be taken or attempted with any hope of success. We, therefore, have very decided objections to the conversion of such a presumption into a principle, and do demur to it, especially in the present case, where the ministers in the majority had a guarantee that they would not be allowed to lose in their temporalities by entering the Free Church; and it is to be marked that it was the ministers that swelled the numbers of the majority, ministers being about as two to one of the elders in the Free Church party—a striking and instructive fact. Had the ministers been as faithful as the elders, and had no undue influence been used by ministers, on the one hand, to get elders of their own sentiments elected as representatives, and, on the other, to prevent

any elder from being sent to the Synod (which latter is said to have been the thing done in the Thurso Session), instead of being left in a *minority*, the Original Secession party would have had a very decided *majority*; yet it is on this dubious principle and this slippery majority that the Decision of Lord Ardmillan is so far founded.

On this very questionable ground, his Lordship determines not only that the whole of the property shall be given to the Free Church party, and not a stone or inch of it to the Original Seceders, but also that the latter party shall be saddled with the Costs. Surely one would have thought that an impartial judge would scarcely have ventured to do more than decree that the property should be divided, and that each party should pay its own expenses.

No doubt he adds, that, "under all the circumstances of this case," he leaves the expenses "subject to modification." He has taken care, however, not to mention, in his Decision or Note, any of the circumstances which have constrained him to make this concession. He has not told us that in this case the minority—who did not swerve a hair-breadth from the principles for which the property was procured, and for the promotion of which it was held in trust, and who still adhere to these principles,—have been driven and locked out of the house in which their fathers praised God, and in which many of them had sworn, with hands lifted up to the Most High, that they would abide by these principles.

It demands special attention, also, that there is a *large amount of irrelevant matter* in Lord Ardmillan's Note; about one-third of the space is occupied with this kind of material. The fifth and sixth pages, in particular, in which his Lordship dwells on the different points in which he alleges that the Free and Secession Churches are agreed, are filled with this sort of matter. Even though we were prepared to admit the accuracy of Lord Ardmillan's statements as to this—which we are not, as will afterwards appear,—we ask, What has this to do with the question at issue? We rejoice to think that there are so many points of doctrine, and of practice, too, in which Original Seceders are agreed with the Free Church and other denominations of Christians; but it is manifest that the special object for which the Secession was originally constituted, and existed as a distinct witnessing society, was not the maintenance of those principles of faith and practice which they held *in common* with the Established Church or other churches, but for the defence, preservation, and promotion of those principles, relating to faith and practice, in which they *differed* from other churches. It was for the support of these distinguishing principles that the property of Seceders was procured and held in trust; and it is the duty of Original Seceders, not only to hold fast and contend earnestly for these principles, but also endeavour, in the use of lawful means, to prevent the property, which had been devoted by their fathers to the support and promotion of them, from being unjustly withdrawn from this sacred object, and devoted to another and a different purpose. As they would not be guilty of this kind of sacrilege themselves, neither should they pusilanimously fold their hands without making any effort to prevent the commission of this sin by others.

There are important points of doctrine as to which even Protestants and Papists are agreed. They are so on the great doctrines of the Holy Trinity and the Supreme Deity, the Divine Sonship and the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. But who would adduce these as proof that there is no essential difference between Papists and Protestants? There are very numerous points of agreement between the Established and the Free Churches. But is Lord Ardmillan prepared to admit that there is therefore no essential points of difference between these churches? Why have the members of the Free Church erected so many churches and mansees over the breadth and length of Scotland? Has it been for the purpose of maintaining the points of doctrine and practice as to which the Established and the Free Churches are agreed? No; it has been for the express object of supporting and propagating those points of principle on which they differ. And we doubt much if Lord Ardmillan would be prepared to acquiesce in the decision of some future judge who should decide that, because the majority of this or that Free Church congregation have seen their way to accede to the Established Church, they shall get the whole property, and that those who abide faithfully by the Free Church principles shall be left houseless, even though at some future day a majority of some Assembly of the Free Church should agree (no very unlikely thing) to accede to the Established Church, on condition that they be allowed to hold the peculiar principles of the Free Church as their own private opinions, subject to the government and discipline of the Established Church.

But there is nothing of which we are more satisfied than that the points of difference between the Free and Original Secession Churches are far more numerous and distinct than are the points of difference between the Established and the Free Churches. All that Lord Ardmillan has stated, with so much care, as to points of agreement between the Free and Original Secession Churches, ought to be dismissed as utterly irrelevant, and as having no bearing on the legal discussion of the question under consideration.

It cannot fail to be marked, also, by every one who impartially examines the Lord Ordinary's Note, that the irrelevant matter has been introduced for the special purpose of supporting the plea of the Free Church party, and of making it appear that there is no essential difference between the Free and Original Secession Churches. Did our space permit, we could give glaring instances of this. Page 4, he says—"No proof of such difference (difference in an essential point) has been adduced or tendered beyond what may be found in a comparison of the *authoritative standards and testimonies* of the two churches and in the terms of union," &c. But is not this the best possible kind of proof that could be adduced? What better could be sought? The fact is, it is too good for the Original Secession party, and therefore his Lordship not only speaks disparagingly of it, as if it were a very weak and defective kind of evidence, but proceeds to try to blunt its edge and weaken its force, by an irrelevant appeal to points of agreement, in which—ignorantly, it may be, and unconsciously—his Lordship, in several instances, makes the points of agreement greater than they really

are, and tries to shade the positions of the two Churches into one another, making the position of the Original Seceders to appear lower than it really is, and that of the Free Church higher than will accord with truth. For example, he employs language, from which those who did not know the facts would infer that the Free Church had a Testimony corresponding to that of the Original Secession Church, whereas the fact is that no such Testimony exists in the Free Church. Such a Testimony was once laid on the table of the Free Assembly; but, though introduced by Dr Candlish, it was ignominiously rejected, and drew forth such an ebullition of indignation and wrath as has rarely been witnessed in an ecclesiastical court.

It is remarkable, too, that Lord Ardmillan refrains from making any distinct statement of the points of difference which the pursuers urged, and which were proved to exist between the Free Church and the Original Secession, though not, of course, proved to the conviction of his Lordship; and that he only refers to them in terms of detraction, or exhibits them enveloped in a mist of prejudice, and of ignorant or designed misrepresentation. We are willing to believe that it is the former.

This is the worst feature of the Lord Ordinary's procedure in this case; and it furnishes a contrast to the conduct of the Irish Chancellor in his speech in connection with the Decision in the Toberdony Case—an authentic report of which is given in the *Original Secession Magazine* (vol. II. p. 337),—in which that distinguished judge states, in the clearest terms, and in all their strength, the pleas of the Free Church party, against whom he decided. He did not shrink from looking these pleas fairly in the face; nor did he feel it necessary to load them with abusive epithets, in order to vindicate the equity of his judgment.

Here Lord Ardmillan shows a sad obliviousness of the principle which he himself states, and to which we call special attention, viz. —That it is not with the doctrines in dispute, *intrinsically* considered, or in their theological aspects, that the judges in a civil court have to do, but as *matters of fact*. The inquiry with them is not, Are these doctrines scriptural, or are they truths of great value and importance? but are they the principles for the support and propagation of which the property in question was procured and held in trust? Not that we have any cause to fear a trial on the merits of the points in dispute before the competent tribunal, or are not prepared to show that these are truths of revelation, and of the greatest importance to the glory of God, and the welfare of the Church and of society. But as a principle in law,* laid down by Lord Ardmillan himself, and acted on in such cases, we do insist that he ought to have respected it. It is a principle, too, which makes the duty of judges, in this and similar cases, comparatively easy. Thus they have to do with the points of difference as they have with the various clauses of a Disposition of pro-

* The Irish Lord Chancellor's words, in delivering his judgment in the Toberdony property case, are—"This court has nothing to do with the reasonableness or unreasonableness of the restrictions which may have been imposed by the original founders. It has only to look to the terms of the trust, and see whether they have been violated."—(*O. S. M.* vol. II. p. 40).

perty, or of a Will, in which it is their duty to see that the property be given to the parties to whom it appears to have been assigned by the expressions employed in the Deed under review.

It should also be distinctly known that the Original Secession Synod, formed of the defecting majority of one, existed for a few weeks, not as the true Synod of United Original Seceders, as Lord Ardmillan will have all men believe, but as the Synod of the Overture of Union with the Free Church, on the terms contained in the Representation and Appeal, in which they committed themselves to a surrender of their sworn-to Judicial Testimony, and virtually laid it aside. It should be distinctly known, we say, that this defecting body, that existed for a few weeks, and claimed the name of the Synod of United Original Seceders, is now extinct—has been completely merged into the Free Church of Scotland—as well as the parties in the different Original Secession congregations who adhered to them. They have no separate existence or organization. They are now ministers and members of the Free Church, and under her government and discipline. In this application of his words, the notable saying of the Free Church leader is true,—the Original Secession Synod of the Representation and Appeal, after the existence of a few weeks, “is extinct.” It has ceased to be. Those who formed that Synod, and laid down their sworn-to Judicial Testimony for the Covenanted Reformation, have *no creed but that of the Free Church. They have no rules of discipline and administration, and no terms of communion but those of the Free Church.* They may have some private opinions besides those contained in the Free Church Standards, just as others may hold private opinions of a diametrically opposite character. But it is evidently no more in their power to attach and transmit property, in the Free Church, for the support of such opinions—so that, disguise it as they may, the conduct of the defenders is just an attempt to divert the property in question at Thurso from the object for which it was procured and held in trust—the support of the distinguishing principles of *Original Seceders*—to the support of the peculiar principles of the *Free Church*; and this, we are prepared to prove, is an object, in various essential points, different from its original destination.

This brings us now to the real merits of the case, from which we are sorry that the doings of the Lord Ordinary have so long kept us.

With all that we have to complain of, we have to thank Lord Ardmillan for distinctly admitting the principle that, “*if the pursuers had established that this union involved a departure, on any essential point, from the fundamental principles of the Original Secession, the Lord Ordinary would have held such a departure to be sufficient ground for inferring forfeiture of the property.*”

We cannot suppose that the expression “essential point” is here employed in the latitudinarian sense of essential to salvation, or essential to be held fast by Christians, as distinguished from those that are spoken of as unessential or circumstantial. For to understand it in this sense would be at variance with the other principle, that civil judges, in a court of law, have not to do with doctrines *intrinsically* considered,

but as *matters of fact*; and they would thus be involved, not only in a theological controversy, but in a controversy in which it has been, and ever will be, found impossible to arrive at a definite conclusion.

But by "essential point," we are surely to understand any point which is a term of communion—which has been, and is, held to be a form of fellowship in the Original Secession Church. This, we think, is the very highest sense in which the expression has been used by former judges, or is now used by his Lordship.

And though Lord Ardmillan "finds that it has not been instructed that, in any essential point, the defenders have departed from the fundamental principles of the said body of Seceders," we are quite prepared to demonstrate, to the conviction of any intelligent, unprejudiced mind, that, by uniting with the Free Church, they have departed, not in *one*, but in *many* essential points, from the fundamental principles of the profession of Original Seceders,—in other words, from principles that are terms of communion in the Original Secession Church, and were so with the first Seceders, being embodied in the Judicial Testimony of 1736, which continued to be the standing Testimony of the Secession, and not, as Lord Ardmillan states, the Extra-Judicial Testimony of 1734, which had only the sanction of a committee, though it is referred to with approbation in the end of the Judicial Testimony (Gibb's Display, p. 163), in these words—"And to a paper that was afterwards emitted by them, entitled," &c.

I. If the *continued or perpetual obligation of the Covenants*—National and Solemn League—be not an "essential point" in the public profession of Original Seceders, it will be impossible to show that there is an essential point in their whole profession.

This occupies a distinct place in the Judicial Testimony of 1736. The terms of that Testimony are (p. 161)—

"In like manner, they do hereby own and assert,—The *perpetual obligation* of the National Covenant of Scotland, frequently subscribed by persons of all ranks in this kingdom; and, particularly, as approved of and explained by the General Assembly, 1638—and sworn by all ranks of persons, anno 1639—and ratified by Act of Parliament, 1640. As also, they own and assert the perpetual obligation of the Solemn League and Covenant for maintaining and carrying on a work of reformation in the three kingdoms, taken and subscribed by all ranks in Scotland and England, anno 1643—ratified by Act of Parliament of Scotland, anno 1644; and, particularly, as renewed in Scotland, with an acknowledgement of sins and an engagement to duties, by all ranks, anno 1648. Concerning which oaths and covenants, they declare and assert, that, as to the matter of them, they were lawful, being plainly contained in the Word of God; and, as to their ends, they were laudable and necessary; and, therefore, they did and hereby do declare their adherence to the same."

It occupies a no less distinct place in the Testimony of 1827, the present Testimony of Original Seceders. Its terms are (p. 163)—

"We maintain the continued obligation of the National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant of the three nations, upon all ranks in these lands, to the latest posterity."

Again, not only is this Testimony, as a whole, enacted as a term of ministerial and Christian communion, and, consequently, this part of it,—the Act of the Synod, prefixed to the Testimony, being in these terms—"The Associate Synod of Original Seceders unanimously

enacted the said Testimony as a term of fellowship, ministerial and Christian, in the body;" and in July, 1842, this enactment is renewed at the union with the Associate Synod (Testimony, p. 2); but the continued obligation of the Covenants is also selected as a prominent and distinct object of testimony, being put into the Formula as a most essential point, which all ministers, preachers, and elders, must expressly acknowledge as a condition of admission to office.

FORMULA—QUESTION IV.

"And do you own and acknowledge the perpetual obligation of the National Covenant, frequently sworn by persons of all ranks in Scotland, and, particularly, as explained by the General Assembly, 1638, to abjure the hierarchy and five articles of Perth; and, also, the perpetual obligation of the Solemn League and Covenant, for maintaining and carrying on a work of reformation in the three kingdoms, sworn and subscribed by all ranks in Scotland and England in the year 1643, and, particularly, as renewed in Scotland in the year 1648: And do you promise, through grace, to adhere to these Covenants, and, according to your station and opportunities, to prosecute the ends of them."

Moreover, union, in the way of dropping a Judicial Testimony for the continued obligation of the Covenants—the very sin of which the Free Church party have been guilty—is condemned and testified against in the Testimony, where it points out the defects in the basis of union between the two large bodies of Seceders in 1820 (pp. 85, 86).

"The testimony to the continued obligation of the National Covenant, and the Solemn League, is dropped." "When the United Synod approve of the 'method adopted by our reforming ancestors, for mutual excitement and encouragement, by solemn confederation and vows to God,' this never can be considered as a recognition of the present and continued obligation of our National Covenants; and still less can we regard, in this light, the following declaration, including all they say on the subject:—'We acknowledge that we are under high obligations to maintain and promote the work of reformation begun, and, to a great extent, carried on by them.'"

It is therefore as clear as noonday that this is "a fundamental principle," or "essential point," in the profession of the Original Secession Church. There is not another point, in all our public principles, of which this is more demonstrably evident. So much so, that Lord Ardmillan may as well affirm that the Original Secession Church has no principles as deny this.

The Lord Ordinary feels that this is a strong point and a powerful argument against his decision. He therefore tries in various ways to evade its force. He attempts this at one time by insinuating that this "essential point" in the profession of Original Seceders is "unintelligible," or "a metaphysical subtilty." "To support such an action," says he, "mere verbal distinctions and *metaphysical subtleties* of difference will not suffice; the departure from original principle, which is to be ascertained in a civil court, and to which the penalty of forfeiture of property is to be attached, must be clear and intelligible, and in an "essential point" (p. 4).

Happily, Original Seceders have clearly defined, in their Testimony, what they mean by Covenant obligation, and the principles on which they maintain the continued obligation of the Covenants (pp. 162, 163)—

"That the obligation pleaded for," say they, "*is the obligation of a social vow or oath*; that the obligation of a vow arises from *the vow itself*, and does not depend on consequences; that, as social vowing proceeds upon the principle that society, whether civil or ecclesiastical, when regularly constituted, is the subject of God's moral government, as well as individual persons, and, as such, capable of social engagements and public faith,—so the perpetual obligation of social vows, having a permanent object, proceeds upon the principle that society thus constituted is recognized both by God and men, as a permanent body, whose identity is unaffected by the change of individuals; and that it is upon these principles that we maintain the continued obligation of the National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant of the three nations, upon all ranks in these lands, to the latest posterity."

The obligation which Lord Ardmillan will have thought abstruse and intangible is one with which judges, of all others, should be most familiar—the obligation of an oath and of a written and subscribed contract. Has his Lordship been so long a judge of the nation without being able to understand the obligation of an oath, which he has been daily administering with all solemnity? Has he never inflicted a penalty on any for perjury? This he could not do without professing, at least, a deep sense of the *superadded* obligation under which an oath brings a man to speak truth, and the aggravated crime of which he is guilty in not merely speaking, but *swearing* falsely. This is the "metaphysical subtilty" for which Original Seceders plead; and there are few peasants in our country to whom it is not perfectly "intelligible."

But his Lordship has another string to his bow. He is not sure that it will be admitted that the obligation of an oath or covenant is something that is not "intelligible," or "a mere metaphysical subtilty." And his next course is to affirm that "the obligation" of the Covenants, "even in its abstract form, was not formally repudiated or denied by the Free Church." Has the Established Church, we ask, formally repudiated or denied the Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ, or the independent jurisdiction of the Church? No; verily. So far is she from doing this, that all her ministers *must subscribe* the Confession of Faith, in which both these principles are not only not denied, but positively and expressly asserted. Will Lord Ardmillan kindly point out any document in which the obligation of the Covenants is asserted as what the ministers of the Free Church must subscribe? The Free Church, if she has not formally repudiated or denied the obligation of the Covenants, has done what the Judge of all the earth will, we fear, at a future day, reckon equivalent to this. She has obstinately refused to confess and bear witness for this part of the Word of Christ's patience when she had a special call to do this in various ways; and when the matter has been brought before her Assemblies, they have certainly not expressed a very flattering or favourable opinion regarding the Covenants or their obligation. Through her refusal to acknowledge their obligation when proposed to her, former negotiations for union between her and the Original Secession Church were broken off; and when the unfaithful majority of the Synod last applied, they were so conscious that the Free Church would still refuse to own the obligation of the Covenants, that they did not even ask her to do so, and

were apparently so well informed of her sentiments and feelings in regard to this, that they felt themselves compelled to *crave a special licence for liberty* to hold these views as *their own private opinion*; and even this they only obtained subject to the discipline and government of the Free Church—a most important *qualification* of the liberty granted. We are not aware that the Established Church, or *any other* church, any more than the Free Church, has ever formally repudiated the obligation of the Covenants, so that this is by no means a proof of any love or favour being even implicitly cherished towards them.

Again, his Lordship says, “the Covenants are not exclusively, or even peculiarly, the muniments of the Secession. They are the testimonies and pledges of the Church of Scotland before there was any Secession.” Does not Lord Ardmillan know that Original Seceders are more forward than himself to admit this, and that they have been, and are, urging this as a special reason why their obligation should be owned by others, and pre-eminently by such as lay claim to the honour of being *the* Church of Scotland? “And,” his Lordship adds, “they are held in veneration by all bodies of Presbyterians within and without the Establishment.” Though this were true of all the bodies referred to as such—and we are far from being *sure* that it is,—whatever truth there may be in it, with regard to individuals in these bodies, what is this to the point? A vague meaningless veneration for these deeds, and *owning their obligation*, are things *toto cælo* different.

But his Lordship has one expedient left yet, and that is to set up a man of straw, or, by a kind of implicit faith, to borrow a man of straw which another had set up, and hold this up as the representative of the Original Secession Church, and display his powers in demolishing this fabrication, thereby thinking to make the sentiments of Original Seceders appear ridiculous. This might be excused in an advocate, but surely it is beneath the dignity of a judge, and does not become the place which he occupies.

“The distinction,” says Lord Ardmillan, “between a body which recognizes covenant obligations, because the matter is just and warrantable, the ends necessary and commendable, and the time seasonable, and a body which maintains the same obligations as inherently and perpetually binding, apart from considerations of matter, ends, and time, is too subtle to be relied on in a court of law as a ground for inferring a forfeiture of property.” Here Lord Ardmillan seems to have got fairly beyond his depth. We strongly suspect he has somewhere met with the *ruse* by which Mr White of Haddington tried to mystify the question of the obligation of the Covenants; but he does not understand the subject which he is discussing so well as that able dialectician did.

What body, we ask, does Lord Ardmillan refer to, which maintains the same obligations, viz., those of covenants, as *inherently and perpetually binding, apart from considerations of matter, ends, and time*, which “is too subtle to be relied on in a court of law?” We know of no such body, and believe it has no existence except in the

fancy of such as are anxious to mystify a plain subject, and throw ridicule and contempt upon the character and contentings of the witnesses for the Covenants; and, as applied to Original Seceders, though uttered from the seat of judgment, we hold it to be gross misrepresentation and injustice. That his Lordship does so apply it is manifest from his next sentence. "But," says he, "even this subtle distinction does not exist to the full extent contended for by the pursuers. The descending force, or perpetual power of the Covenants, taken apart from the matter and ends thereof, has never been authoritatively proclaimed by the Secession as a principle of foundation, or a term of communion." His Lordship is now completely at sea. Who has ever said that the Secession either held or promulgated such a nonentity as this, and, moreover, made it "a principle of foundation." This is a fiction of Lord Ardmillan's own brain. Who would be so foolish as contend about the obligation of a bond that bound to nothing? And the Covenants, apart from their matter and ends, would be a nullity which bound to nothing, and, if money bonds, would not be worth a farthing.

His Lordship is not yet done, however. He next tries his hand at argument; and, if he went beyond his depth in exposition, he here unwittingly uses an argument by which the Highest himself is charged with foolishness. This is the argument—"The provision made for renewing the Covenants, by persons willingly offering themselves, seems scarcely consistent with an absolute and perpetual obligation, binding by its *descending force, without regard to ends.*" This mode of expression has the credit of originality; but with this, we fear, it scarcely escapes the discredit of absurdity. We are utterly unable to grasp the idea which his Lordship has before his mind, with the absurdity of holding which, as a *serious* principle, he means to charge some parties. Lord Ardmillan seems to have formed such an opinion of Original Seceders—whether from education or hearsay we cannot tell—that nothing is too absurd to be ascribed to them. But in the act of unjustly charging Original Seceders with holding an absurdity, Lord Ardmillan has the merit of forging, "in a court of law," "verbal distinctions and metaphysical subtleties," the meaning of which few can understand, and we are by no means sure that he does so himself. The argument, however, to which he links the absurdity is clear enough. It is, that Seceders seem to have been, and to be, chargeable with inconsistency in renewing Covenants which they hold to be perpetually binding. The two things, we are sure, are perfectly consistent. It is undeniable that the God of Israel held the covenant into which Israel entered with Him at Horeb to be perpetually binding; and yet, with *His* express sanction, under the guidance of *His* miraculously accredited servants, that covenant was again and again renewed; and far clearer-headed men than his Lordship can pretend to be, both within and without the Church of Scotland, have seen no inconsistency in these two things. Lord Ardmillan might have known that Seceders have not renewed, and do not renew the Covenants, to render their obligation permanent, but in the way of solemnly *recogniz-*

ing their permanent obligation after they have been grievously and in many ways violated—"with the view of *deepening* a sense of their obligation upon their own mind, and of stirring themselves up to greater zeal and faithfulness in carrying out the ends for which they were framed, as well as of bringing others around them, and, as far as their influence can reach, to acknowledge them." As the Lord Ordinary is fond of appealing to the late Dr M'Crie, we here quote his sentiments on this subject, (Sermons on Unity, p. 123)—

"By renewing these engagements (the Covenants) in an oath," &c., (Seceders) "served themselves heirs to the professions, vows, and contendings of their fathers, or rather to the cause of God, transmitted to them by their fathers, under all these sacred sanctions and solemnities."

When will the Free Church thus "serve herself heir" to the cause of God, as transmitted by the fathers of the Church of Scotland of the First and Second Reformation? Moreover, we are not a little surprised that in Lord Ardmillan's practice, as advocate or judge, he never appears to have known of a Bond of Corroboration having been granted, and that he seems to be unaware that such a bond, so far from being inconsistent with, or lessening or nullifying, the obligation arising from the original bond, would, as its name implies, tend to *corroborate* and *validate* the obligation contained in it. The *principle* applicable in the present case and the above, we consider, are identical.

We think, therefore, from this varied induction of evidence, that it is as clearly demonstrated as it can be that the continued obligation of the Covenants is a fundamental principle of the Original Secession Church, and that this principle has not been, and is not held by the Free Church, to which the party holding the property at Thurso now belongs; and this alone, being an "essential point," demands, even Lord Ardmillan himself being judge, that the property shall be held as forfeited by the Free Church party, and as belonging to the Original Seceders at Thurso, who stand connected with the Synod of United Original Seceders—who are, in their ecclesiastical and judicial capacity, still maintaining this principle as a term of ministerial and Christian communion.

But we are prepared to prove that there are also many other "essential points" of difference between the Free and Original Secession Churches, a few of which we now proceed to state as briefly as possible. There are no less than *ten* of these enumerated in the 13th article of the condescendence in the closed record; and these are so far from exhausting the differences, that they do not include one very important difference, which we proceed to state.

II. The Free Church *does not practice the duty of covenanting*, or *make the renewing of the Covenants a term of communion, either ministerial or Christian*. But we shall prove that the Original Secession Church does both. Lord Ardmillan tries, either through inadvertance or design, to confound this with the question of the obligation of the Covenants, and to make the most of the confusion thus produced; but the things are quite distinct. He even denies the fact that the subscribing of the Covenants is a term of ministerial com-

munion, and that it has been enforced as an inflexible duty. "And," says he, in the conclusion of the notable sentence, on which commitments have been made—"and the subscribing of the Covenants has never been enforced as an inflexible duty, apart from suitableness of time and circumstances." Again (p. 5), he says, "It does not appear that the actual taking of the Covenant has been, either by the standards or by the practice of the Original Secession, made a term of communion (Gibb's Display, p. 253); and, according to the formula of questions at ordination, the minister is not taken absolutely bound to subscribe or renew the Covenants; but he promises to prosecute the ends of the Covenants—he owns their obligation, and he acknowledges that the renewing of them in a bond suited to our circumstances is a seasonable duty."

Such is the apparent eagerness with which his Lordship grasps at what he thinks will favour his Free Church friends, and tell against Original Seceders. But Lord Ardmillan has again run too fast. It is true that the minister is not taken bound in the formula to subscribe or renew the Covenants. But why? For the best reason—to which his Lordship did not advert,—viz., this, that he is already supposed, according to a standing law of the Original Secession Church, to have renewed the Covenants, or given a solemn pledge that he will embrace the first opportunity of doing so. The words of the Original Secession Testimony are (p. 68)—"*None shall subsequently be licenced to preach the gospel in the body, who have not joined in the bond, or at least given a solemn pledge to do so when an opportunity is offered. But in this last case (that of giving a solemn pledge), it is understood that the Synod shall be consulted, and its consent obtained;*" so that the report of the pledge must be put on record in the minutes of Synod. The act of the first Seceders, as to this, runs in the following terms:—

"By an Act at Edinburgh, on the 14th day of February, 1744, the Presbytery did 'agree, resolve, and determine that the *renovation* of the National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant of the three nations, in the manner now agreed upon and proposed by the Presbytery, shall be the term of ministerial communion with this Presbytery, and, likewise, of Christian communion, in the admission of people to sealing ordinances; secluding therefrom all *opposers, contemners, and slighers* of the said renovation of our Covenants. And, moreover, as the Presbytery judge that much tenderness and lenity is to be used with the weakest of Christ's flock—who are lying open to light, and minding to come forward in the said cause—that they may not be, at first instance, secluded from sealing ordinances: So they agree that all such are to be secluded, who, after deliberate pains taken for their information, with all due meekness and patience, shall be found, by the Session, or superior judicatories they are in subjection unto, to be *neglecters and shiflers* of this important moral duty; or *not to be*, themselves, in the due use of means for light and satisfaction thereant."

It is therefore incontrovertible that the duty of renewing the Covenants is inflexibly a term of ministerial communion in the Original Secession Church, and was so in the General Associate Synod of Edinburgh at the time the congregation at Thurso was formed, and the property obtained; and also of Christian communion, in the terms of the act just quoted, which it is not necessary to repeat. It is true, also, "that the subscribing of the Covenants has never been

enforced as an inflexible duty, apart from the suitableness of time and circumstances." But what of that, when the "seasonableness" was and is declared in the Testimony, which is a term of Christian as well as ministerial communion.

This is another very important "point" of difference between the Free and Original Secession Churches; and it is one which even Lord Ardmillan cannot call a metaphysical subtlety—for it is a law as to *practice*,—nor will it be said that there is any law corresponding to this in the Free Church. Are *any* in the Free Church ever required to renew the Covenants? Can none be licenced to preach the gospel in the Free Church, and can none be ordained in that Church till they have either renewed the Covenants or given a solemn pledge to do so when an opportunity is offered? Or has such an opportunity ever been offered in the Free Church? No one will answer any of these questions in the affirmative. But this forms an essential point of the Testimony of the Original Secession Church—of that Testimony, for the maintenance of which the Original Secession Church has been and is associated, and to the support of which the property connected with that Church at Thurso was devoted and held in trust.

It may be said that Original Seceders do not greatly abound in the practice of covenant renovation themselves; and it is readily admitted that it becomes them to engage in this more than they do. It is a fact, however, that the writer of this paper has, on three separate occasions, engaged in this solemn work in the congregation of which he is pastor; and that he has thrice engaged in this duty as a member of the Synod, when they, in a Synodical capacity, united, with hands lifted up to Almighty God, in renewing the Covenants.

III. The Original Secession Church *stands on the ground occupied by the Church of Scotland in the Second Reformation period of her history, from 1638 to 1650, while the Free Church stands on the ground of the Revolution Settlement.*—This is a very important difference between the two churches, and affects the constitution of these churches in various particulars. While in the Church of Scotland the first Seceders testified against the failures in duty with which she was chargeable at the Revolution, as well as after that event, and, especially, for not then resuming the position of the Church of Scotland during the Second Reformation. And no sooner had they begun to act in a judicial capacity, in a state of separation from the Established Church, than they connected themselves constitutionally with, and took up the very position of, the Church of Scotland during the Second Reformation, and identified themselves with her in their whole profession and administration. This they did most fully in the Judicial Testimony of 1736, which was enacted a term of ministerial and Christian communion, by which they bound themselves, as an ecclesiastical society, to the constitution of the Church of Scotland of the Second Reformation, *as distinguished from that of the Church of Scotland at and since the Revolution Settlement*, against the evils and defects of which they distinctly testified.

In the Judicial Testimony, of which the present Testimony of the Original Seceders is a re-exhibition in so far as it refers to the matter

contained in that Testimony, they *first*, as we have already seen, take up their position as an ecclesiastical society, on the ground of the Second Reformation, in respect of profession or doctrinal standards, and of administration. In the *second place*, they explicitly testify against the evils and defects of the Revolution Settlement. This is not done in vague, general terms. The things complained of and condemned, in the conduct of the State and of the Church at that time, are distinctly specified. This occupies no less than four pages in the Testimony of 1736 (beginning Gibb's Display, p. 86), and two pages and a half of the Testimony of 1827 (see pp. 42, 43, 44), the present Testimony of Original Seceders. The passages are too long to quote here; but were they quoted, and what the Free Church in her Act and Declaration says on this subject put in a parallel column, the contrast would be very striking. It would be seen that the fault found by the Free Church with the Revolution Settlement is expressed in very vague and general terms; and that, instead of approving the Reformation carried on between 1638 and 1650, she condemns the spirit and conduct of the Reformers of that period in severe terms, and blames the defects in that Reformation as the cause, in a great measure, of the dreadful persecutions and other evils of the following period. She says that our fathers, during that period, "have given some occasion for the charge of intolerance," that "instances are not wanting of an undue mingling of religion with the passing politics of the day," and, in short, that the "defects" of the Second Reformation were such as "some of the worthiest and ablest of the actors lived to deplore," &c. (Act and Declaration, pp. 8, 9). *Thirdly*, In that Testimony, and subsequent acts, the first Seceders, in their organized and judicial capacity, do the things themselves which they condemn and testify against the Church of Scotland for *not doing* at the Revolution. 1st, They "expressly approve of the Reformation carried on between 1638 and 1650." 2d, They justify the testimonies and sufferings in behalf of that Reformation (Gibb's Display, pp. 162, 163). 3d, They assert the continued obligation of the Covenants, and the divine right of Presbytery. 4th, They become a Covenanting Church, and engage in the renewing of the Covenants. 5th, They make entering into the bond for renewing the Covenants an inflexible term of ministerial communion, as we have already seen, and a term of Christian communion, as explained in the Act quoted. 6th, They received the Westminster Standards as standards of uniformity for the three nations. And, 7th, above all, they make the Testimony and other Acts, in which all this is done, a term of communion, both ministerial and Christian. So that all this entered expressly into the constitution of the Secession Church, and continues to occupy a broad and prominent place in the constitution of the Church of United Original Seceders.

But has the Free Church done any of these things? Has she expressly approved of the Reformation carried on between 1638 and 1650? No; instead of this she has charged it with deplorable defects. Has she asserted the perpetual obligation of the Covenants? No; she has distinctly refused to own their obligation. Has she engaged in the duty of renewing the Covenants? No. Has she received the West-

minster Standards, as they were received by the Reformed and Covenanted Church of Scotland, as standards of covenanted uniformity for the churches in the three nations? No. Has she asserted the divine right of Presbytery? No. Above all, has she embodied a condemnation of the Revolution Settlement and an approval of the Second Reformation in a testimony, and enacted this as a term of ministerial and Christian fellowship? We are compelled to answer a sixth time—No. The little she has said, reflecting on the Revolution Settlement, is in an Act which occupies no higher place of authority than that of a “preface,” an approval of which is required of no member, elder, or minister, as a term of communion, and this is combined with much stronger reflections on the Second Reformation. So far is the Free Church from taking up her position on the ground of the Second Reformation, as the first Seceders did, and on which Original Seceders have stood, and still stand, that we find her leader boasting that the judges in the minority in the Court of Session found that the Free Church was the Church of the Revolution, and, re-echoing their judgment—“we are the Church of the Revolution.”

“That venerable body,” says Dr Candlish, “of the most eminent judges in this country—the minority in point of number, but containing the vast preponderance of legal talent—Lords Moncrieff, Jeffrey, Cockburn, and others—who distinctly gave their solemn conviction that the position *we now claim to occupy is correct,—that we are the Church of the time of the Revolution.*”—*Speech at Glasgow, 13th November, 1855, as reported in the Witness, 17th November.*

Let the Free Church do the things stated above, which Seceders have done, but which we have seen the Free Church has not done; let her retract the *strong things* she has said *against* the Second Reformation; and let her embody all this in a Testimony, which shall be a term of ministerial and Christian communion, and then there will be some cause for saying that the Free Church is identified with the Church of Scotland of the Second Reformation, and that she and the Original Secession Church occupy the same ground.

We are satisfied that it has been from not duly examining the subject, and from giving, unwittingly, we trust, too ready an ear to what was said in the defenders' behalf, that Lord Ardmillan has said (p. 6), “The Free Church appears to the Lord Ordinary to occupy the same ground as the Original Seceders,” in the various ways which he specifies; and he surely has not duly examined the evidence laid before him in the condescendence, article 10th,—in which *ten* other points of difference, of which that stated before is one, besides the obligation of the Covenants, are expressly stated and numbered,—when he says (p. 6), “*No difference* has been *seriously* urged except in regard to the recognition of the Covenants,” as if the other points were only got up for show; whereas, they are all parts of the public Testimony of Seceders, from the commencement to the present time. Surely he does not intend to assert that Seceders have not been, and are not, “serious” in urging and holding the different parts of their solemnly avouched sworn-to profession.

IV. Original Seceders, in their Testimony, *pointedly condemn and testify against the Treaty of Union with England in some of its essen-*

tial stipulations, which the Free Church homologates, and on which she specially founds her Claim of Right. In the Claim, Declaration, and Protest of the Free Church, there is frequent and special reference made to the Treaty of Union; but, so far as we can find, this is always with approbation, nor can we find a single expression implying dissatisfaction with, or dissent from, any of its parts. As specimens of the manner in which it is spoken of, we give the following:—"The General Assembly," &c.; "Do, in name and behalf of this Church, and of the nation and people of Scotland, and under the sanction of the several statutes and the *Treaty of Union* hereinbefore recited, CLAIM as of RIGHT," &c. (Authorized Standards, p. 440).

The words of the PROTEST, again, are—"WE, THEREFORE, the ministers and elders," &c., "DO PROTEST that the conditions fore-
said, while we deem them contrary to, and subversive of, the settlement of church government effected at the Revolution, and solemnly guaranteed by the Act of Security and Treaty of Union," &c. (*Ib.* p. 445).

As a contrast to this, we adduce the following statements, regarding the Treaty of Union, from the authorized Standards of the Original Secession Church (Testimony of United Original Seceders, p. 46):—

"Our national guilt was increased by the terms in which the incorporating union between Scotland and England was settled, and the measures which followed upon it. How desirable soever the union was in itself, and how great soever the political advantages which have resulted from it are, yet, the maintenance of the hierarchy and ceremonies in England being declared a fundamental and essential article of it, the nation of Scotland, by giving its consent to this, virtually renounced that sacred League and Oath which it was previously under, to endeavour the reformation of religion in England."

With this the sentiments expressed in the *Judicial* Testimony of 1736 completely harmonize (see Gibb's Display, pp. 91, 92, 93).

Again, in the acknowledgment of sins, the United Original Secession Church uses the following terms in speaking of this Treaty of Union (Testimony, p. 206):—

"Our public guilt was increased by the Treaty of Union with England, by which, in opposition to our covenant-union with it, the maintenance of the hierarchy and ceremonies of the Church of England is made a fundamental and essential article of the union of the two kingdoms; and thus that antichristian form of government and superstitious worship in the neighbouring country has all the security which human laws can give it, and that with the consent of Scotland, in direct violation of our solemn covenant engagements."

With this the acknowledgment of sins of the First Seceders harmonizes (see Gibb's Display, vol. I. p. 232).

These extracts require no comment. In the Free Church documents, the Treaty of Union is ever held forth as if it were faultless, while in the Secession Testimonies of 1736 and 1827, this Treaty is testified against as one in the formation of which the nation has contracted guilt of no ordinary magnitude. And whatever some parties may think of this point of difference, this formed a special part of the Testimony, for upholding which the property in question was originally purchased and continued to be held in trust. It is still an essential point in the Original Secession Testimony, which has not only no place among the principles of the Free Church; but, on the contrary, what

is *condemned* by Original Seceders, is made a *special foundation* on which the Free Church rests her Claim of Right and Protest.

V. Original Seceders receive all the Westminster Standards in relation to the doctrine and the government of the Church—1st, As of equal authority; 2d, as express *tests* of official communion; and 3d, as parts of the covenanted uniformity in the churches of the three kingdoms, or as they were received by the Covenanted Church of Scotland of the Second Reformation. But the Free Church does none of these things. She does not receive all the Westminster Standards as of equal authority—she makes none of them a *test* except the Confession of Faith—she requires none of her ministers or office-bearers to receive them as parts of the covenanted uniformity. The difference here—which is not what can be called “metaphysical subtleties” or “verbal distinctions,” but extends to whole books—will be best seen by placing the Formulas in parallel columns, and marking in Italics, in the Original Secession Formula, what is wanting in that of the Free Church :—

ORIGINAL SECESSION.

QUESTION II.

“Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith,—*compiled by the Assembly of Divines who met at Westminster, with Commissioners from the Church of Scotland—as the said Confession was received and approved by the Assembly of that Church in the year 1647—and likewise the whole doctrine contained in the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, compiled by the said Westminster Assembly*,—to be founded upon the Word of God: And do you acknowledge the said Confession as the confession of your faith; and will you, through grace, firmly and constantly adhere to,—and, to the utmost of your power, assert, maintain, and defend the doctrine of,—the said Confession and *Catechisms*, against all Deistical, Popish, Arian, Socinian, Arminian, Neonomian, Antinomian, and other doctrines, tenets, and opinions whatsoever, contrary to, or *inconsistent with*, the said Confession and *Catechisms*?”

FREE CHURCH.

QUESTION II.

“Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrines contained in the Confession of Faith, approved by former General Assemblies of this Church, to be founded on the Word of God: And do you acknowledge the same as the confession of your faith; and will you firmly and constantly adhere thereto, and, to the utmost of your power, assert, maintain, and defend the same, and the purity of worship as presently practised in this Church?”

Here it will be marked that the Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, have no place in the Free Church Formula,—that the candidate for office is not required to receive even the Confession of Faith *as* it was received and approved by the Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the year 1647—a very important condition; but, instead of this, we have in the Free Church Formula a mere historical fact stated—“approved by former General Assemblies of this Church,”—defining the Confession, but requiring nothing in relation to the manner in which it was received.

QUESTION III.

"Are you persuaded that the Lord Jesus Christ, the alone King and Head of his Church, hath appointed a particular form of government to take place therein,—distinct from civil government, and not subordinate to the same; and that Presbyterian Church government, without any superiority of office above a teaching Presbyter, in due subordination of Judicatories (such as of Kirk-sessions to Presbyteries, of Presbyteries to Provincial Synods, and of Provincial Synods to General Assemblies), is the only form of government laid down and appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ in his Word, to continue in his Church to the end of the world unalterable,—which, accordingly, has been owned and received by the Church of Scotland, as the only GOVERNMENT OF DIVINE INSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENT; as is evident from the Second Book of Discipline, and from the Proposition concerning church government, as the said Propositions were received and approved by an act of Assembly, 1645, session 16: And do you promise to submit to the said government and discipline, and never to endeavour, directly or indirectly, the prejudice or subversion thereof; but that you will, to the utmost of your power in your station, during all the days of your life, maintain, support, and defend the same—together with the purity of worship received and practised in this Church—against all Erastian, Prelatic, Sectarian, or other tenets, opinions, or forms of worship and government whatsoever—contrary to, or inconsistent with, the said worship, government, and discipline,—sworn to in our Covenants, National and Solemn League?"

It will be observed that the Free Church does not require her office-bearers to be persuaded or to acknowledge that Presbyterian Church government is "the only form of government laid down and appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ in his Word," but only that it is "founded upon the Word of God, and agreeable thereto," which we know has been interpreted in accordance with the latitudinarian principle, that the Bible is so general and indefinite in its teaching² on this subject, that various forms of church government may be founded on, and agreeable to, the Word of God; or she speaks of it as the "only government of this Church," which asserts no principle but a plain fact. Again, it will be seen that the Free Church makes no special reference, in her Formula, either to the Second Book of Discipline or

QUESTION IV.

"Are you persuaded that the Presbyterian government and discipline of this Church are founded upon the Word of God, and agreeable thereto; and do you promise to submit to the said government and discipline, and to concur with the same, and not to endeavour, directly or indirectly, the prejudice or subversion thereof, but to the utmost of your power, in your station, to maintain, support, and defend the said discipline and Presbyterian government by Kirk-session, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies?"

QUESTION V.

"Do you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, as King and Head of the Church, has therein appointed a government in the hands of church officers, distinct from, and not subordinate, in its own province, to civil government; and that the civil magistrate does not possess jurisdiction or authoritative control over the regulation of the affairs of Christ's Church?"*

* What follows in this question in the Free Church Formula has reference to things which could not enter into the profession of Original Seceders, as they had no existence till 1842 and 1843, and are contained in Free Church documents.

to the Westminster Propositions of church government, as received and approved by an act of Assembly, 1645—viz., as a part of the “uniformity betwixt the kirks in both kingdoms;” nor does the Free Church make any reference to the important fact that “the Presbyterian government has been owned and received by the Church of Scotland as the *only government of divine institution and appointment*,” or as “the government and discipline sworn to in our Covenants, National and Solemn League.”

There are here a number of points of difference between the two churches as to terms of official fellowship, and, consequently, as to “essential points.”

1st, The Free Church has only *one* standard as a doctrinal test, whereas the Original Secession Church has *three* as doctrinal tests. 2d, The Free Church requires none of her office-bearers to receive the Westminster Standards, not even the Confession of Faith, *as* received by the Church of Scotland of the Second Reformation—that is, as parts of the *covenanted uniformity*,—whereas the Original Secession receives them all in this form, and requires all her office-bearers to do so. 3d, The Free Church requires not her office-bearers to acknowledge the Presbyterian government as the “*only government of divine institution and appointment*,” as the Original Secession does; but either as “the only government of this Church”—a very different thing—or, generally, “as founded upon the Word of God, and agreeable thereto.” 4th, There is no mention in the Free Church Formula of the Second Book of Discipline, or of the Westminster Propositions—in which the divine right of Presbytery is asserted, as defining the government and discipline required to be believed in and held fast—as there is very distinctly and particularly in the Secession Formula. 5th, The office-bearers of the Free Church are not required to maintain, support, and defend Presbytery against *Prelatic and Sectarian* (that is, Independent) *tenets and opinions*, as the office-bearers of the Original Secession Church are: Nor, 6th, are they required to contemplate the government and discipline “as sworn to in our Covenants, National and Solemn League.” These are not trifling differences: they enter into the constitution of the two churches, and give the whole profession and standing of the two churches different aspects; and, being prominent terms of fellowship, in the Original Secession Church, they are emphatically “essential points.”

VI. The Free Church does not condemn *lay-patronage as anti-scriptural*, which is done by the Original Secession Church.

It should be known by all who have studied the history of the two churches, that there is a radical difference between them on this subject. In the Secession movement, it was the right of the Christian people to *elect or choose* their own pastors that was contended for: in the Free Church agitation, it was merely the right of the people to resist *intrusion* that was the matter of contest. “Non-intrusion” was the watchword—not the right of election; but non-intrusion is not anti-patronage. The first Seceders demanded, as a condition of return to the Church of Scotland, that an act should be passed, “prohibiting the acceptance of presentations,” by the following severe censures:

—"That probationers accepting of them should be deprived of licence—that ministers, for such a transgression, shall be suspended, and, if tenaciously adhering, deposed." (Gibb's Display, vol. I. p. 52; Re-exhibition, p. 256. See also Original Secession Testimony, pp. 166, 207).

It is true that there is now no lay-patronage in the Free Church, *because* there is no scope for its exercise. This, however, only renders it the more striking that she has never declared patronage to be contrary to the Word of God, or passed any Act, so far as we know, that would prevent her from returning immediately to the Establishment, were the Veto Act sanctioned by the State, and administering patronage according to that law, *which leaves election with the patron*, and has many regulations tending to cripple the efforts of the Christian people in their opposition to an unacceptable presentee—in other words, to intrusion.

As the following four points have respect to practice—the proof of which is furnished in countless facts, which are, or may be, known to all,—we shall only state them, and refer to the parts of the Original Secession Testimony in which they are condemned and testified against, and as proof that they are essential points or terms of communion, Christian as well as ministerial, in the Original Secession Church.

VII. The Original Secession Church, in her Testimony, very pointedly condemns the *practice of free communion*, but the Free Church does not; on the contrary, she holds communion, both ministerial and Christian, with other churches.

That this is no small practical evil, in the estimation of the Original Secession Church, is manifest from what is stated on this subject in her Testimony (pp. 180, 181, 182).

VIII. *Private baptism* is extensively practised in the Free Church; but this is expressly condemned in the Testimonies of Seceders—in that of 1736 and that of 1827 (Gibb's Display, vol. I. p. 58; Original Secession Testimony, pp. 20, 166, 167).

IX. The Free Church practises the *singing of uninspired hymns and paraphrases in the worship of God*, which is condemned in the Original Secession Testimony (pp. 154, 155). This innovation in the worship of God did not spring up in the Primitive Church till the fifth or sixth century (Neander's History, vol. III. p. 451). The Westminster Assembly held and acted on the principle of an inspired psalmody; and this is strenuously contended for by some large Presbyterian Churches in the United States.

X. The Free Church rests satisfied with administering *discipline for flagrant public scandals in private*, which is testified against in the Original Secession Testimony, and is also contrary to the laws and practices of the Church of Scotland in the First and Second Reformation periods (Original Secession Testimony, p. 186).

XI. The last point of difference which we shall mention is, that the Free Church *has no Testimony*, nor any *definite terms of communion*, for the private members of the Church, whereas the Original Secession Church has a public extended Testimony, in behalf of injured truth in

past and present times, and against error in principle and practice, which Testimony is a term of ministerial or official *and Christian* communion. This is a complex point of difference of the greatest importance, entering deeply into the constitution of both churches, and giving great additional weight to the other points of difference specified, on which it re-duplicates, and which it renders *pre-eminently essential points*. This will appear in the clearest light, in the act of the Synod enacting the Testimony, and the fifth question of the Formula, which we now quote in full—

“EDINBURGH, 18th May, 1827.

“In the Meeting-House, Infirmary Street, the Associate Synod of Original Seceders having met and been constituted, &c., agreed that the following notice be prefixed to their Testimony :—

“The preparatory steps to union between the Associate Synod and Constitutional Associate Presbytery having terminated in the mutually expressed consent of these Courts to unite on the ground of a Testimony, the Overture of which, after being printed and circulated, was finally corrected by the two bodies met in general conference; and the Synod having been constituted under the designation of the Associate Synod of Original Seceders, *unanimously enacted the said Testimony as a term of fellowship, ministerial and Christian, in their body*, and appointed it to be published with all convenient speed; the tenor whereof follows.” See also Deed of Synod at the union with the Associate Synod in 1842 (Testimony, p. 2).

FORMULA—QUESTION V.

“Do you approve of the Testimony enacted and emitted by the Associate Synod of Original Seceders, as a suitable and reasonable testimony for the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Reformed Church of Scotland; and do you, in your judgment, *disapprove of the several steps of defection, both in former and present times, condemned in the said Testimony, as contrary to the word of God, the Confession of Faith, and our Solemn Covenants?*”

Here it will be marked that the candidate for office is required expressly to disapprove of the *several steps of defection, both in former and present times*, condemned in the said Testimony. The steps of defection condemned in the Testimony include all the points mentioned above, and others which have not been mentioned—such as the “Public Resolutions” (p. 33), in these words,—“The first step of defection in Scotland, and that which led the way to the overthrow of the Reformation, was the measure commonly called the “Public Resolutions.” This part of the Formula includes, also, all the points specified as defects in the Revolution Settlement—the Treaty of Union—the not owning the obligation of the Covenants and the divine right of Presbytery—the not receiving the Westminster Standards as parts of the covenanted uniformity, and only the Confession of Faith as a test—the practice of private baptism—of singing uninspired hymns and paraphrases—of free communion, and the private administration of discipline for public scandals. This makes all these things, in the highest legal sense, “essential points.”

The want of such a Testimony in the Free Church, or of any Testimony as a term of Christian fellowship, is an essential difference. And it is also to be marked that any slight references made to defects in the Revolution Settlement by the Free Church, being in transient Acts, which are no terms of communion, and to which there

is no reference in the Formula, enter not into the constitution of the Free Church, but are placed by her among non-essential things; and, therefore, though there were far less difference between those partial references in certain Acts of the Free Church and the distinct statements of the Original Secession Testimony than there is, the conversion of what are held as "essential points" in the Original Secession Church, into *non-essential points* in the Free Church, is itself a *most essential point* of difference, and of the greatest importance, and sweeps away all that Lord Ardmillan adduces as an apology for his decision.

There is a strong corroboration of all that is stated in the preceding pages on this subject in the following instructions, which the Synod *unanimously* agreed in giving to their Committee, appointed to enter into negotiations with the Free Church with a view to union, which were subsequently discontinued because satisfaction could not be got from the Free Church Committee regarding the matter of these instructions.

The following is a copy :—

"That the Committee be instructed to direct the attention of the Committee of the Free Church to our Testimony generally, and particularly to the following points on which we may be supposed to differ, endeavouring to ascertain their views upon them, and to bring ours prominently before them.

"1st, The obligation of our Solemn National Covenants.

"2d, The present seasonableness and practicability of the duty of Covenanting.

"3d, The Divine right of Presbytery.

"4th, The recognition of the whole of the Westminster Standards, as Standards of Covenanted Uniformity in the three nations.

"5th, Free Communion.

"That in dealing with the brethren of the Free Church, it be given them distinctly to understand that, from the relation in which we stand to the Covenants and the Covenanted Reformation, *we cannot be expected to resile from our ground, and that no terms of union that do not include a judicial recognition of the whole of the Covenanted Reformation, can be considered adequate on our part.*"

It demands special attention that these instructions were given at the date of them, 1843; and unanimously agreed to by the whole Synod of United Original Seceders (including the minority and majority)—that they have reference to union with the identical Church to which the defenders have acceded—that the majority of the Synod and the defenders have entered into union with that Church without obtaining satisfaction *on so much as one* of the points specified in the instructions; and, farther, that it was in consequence of the refusal of such satisfaction by the Free Church Committee at that time that the negotiations between the two churches were discontinued, because then Original Seceders were unanimous in refusing to "resile from their ground," and the Committee of the Free Church in declining to take higher ground on the points of difference; nor has the Free Church, as we have shown above, done so to this day in regard to so much even as one of the points of difference.

We have thus shown clearly, by documentary evidence of an irrefragable character, that the union with the Free Church involved a departure, not in one "essential point," but in more than half-a-score of such points, from the fundamental principles of the Original Secession; and, consequently, proved that there is not only sufficient,

but greatly more than sufficient ground why it should be concluded that the Free Church party at Thurso have forfeited all claims to the Original Secession property there, and that they have been chargeable with great injustice in withdrawing that property from the *bona fide* Original Secession congregation at Thurso, and by attempting to carry it into the Free Church, which does not hold *any* of the peculiar and distinguishing principles above adverted to, for the support and promotion of which it was originally procured, and has been since held in trust.

It is not our province to enter into disquisitions regarding legal decisions; but there is one place in his Note in which Lord Ardmillan tries to set aside the decision in the case of *Craigie v. Marshall*, as if it did not apply to the question now at issue—as to the Thurso property—to which we may be permitted to advert.

Lord Ardmillan says,—“*There is no question here, such as arose in Craigie v. Marshall, of the right of the Synod to force the congregation into a union with another body of Christians, under penalty of forfeiting the property in case of refusal.*”

It is passing strange that such an assertion should be made by the Lord Ordinary.

Here, in the Thurso question, there is a Synod made up of a majority of *one*—a Synod very different in this respect from the majority against Dr Marshall and his congregation—a Synod that Lord Ardmillan says, in his Interlocutor, have a right, by their adherents, to take the whole property from the Original Seceders at Thurso, because they refuse to follow them into a union with the Free Church, as the United Synod sought to do by their adherents at Kirkintilloch, Craigie, and others, but which the Court of Session would not permit. The cases are not only parallel—that of the Free Church party at Thurso is more aggravated than that of Craigie and his adherents.

Here is a body, whom Lord Ardmillan at least owns to be a Synod, that, through their adherents at Thurso, have driven the Original Seceders there from their property, because they have refused to enter into a union with another body, and thereby abandon their principles, and do violence to their consciences. Here is a congregation that adheres to the true Synod of United Original Seceders denuded of the property, should the Lord Ordinary's decision stand unreversed, solely because they did not follow a Synod formed of a dubious majority of one into a union with the Free Church—a union, too, formed on grounds which had all along been condemned by the Original Secession Church, *and which her whole Synod had a little before refused to adopt*—that of laying down their judicial and sworn-to Testimony for the peculiar principles of Seceders, and acceding to another church that has no Testimony for these principles—that avows, in the very act of union, that she will not be committed to them. Here is a congregation, too, that, should Lord Ardmillan's decision stand, is to be charged with all the expenses incurred in adopting lawful means to recover the property of which they had been thus robbed, in addition to their being left houseless for so many years.

It is scarcely necessary to advert to the light in which Lord

Ardmillan tries to exhibit the case, in order to show that it is not only not parallel, but the reverse of parallel to that of *Craigie v. Marshall*.

"This," says his Lordship, "is an attempt by a minority of a congregation" (we have seen how Original Seceders were put into a minority) "to withdraw" (not recover) "the property from the minister" (the minister who was bound himself, and who had bound them solemnly, in various ways, to adhere to the principles which he has now himself abandoned judicially, but to which the minority are cleaving) "and the majority" (the dubious majority) "on the ground of forfeiture, alleged" (merely alleged) "to be incurred by following the Synod" (here we have the Synod which "was not" in the former sentence, because the idea of its existence would have damaged the argument) "into union with another body of Christians"—(this is a large admission after all.) But let us repeat his Lordship's sentence without the parenthetical comments, ere we take up and meet the kind of argument which it contains; and, to give it all due prominence, we put it in italics.

"This is an attempt by a minority of the congregation to withdraw the property from the minister and the majority, on the ground of forfeiture, alleged to be incurred by following the Synod into union with another body of Christians."

The party who followed the Synod, as Craigie and his party at Kirkintilloch did, into a union with another body of Christians, and were thereby held to have forfeited the right to the property, must, in this case, be recognized as the sole proprietors of the property at Thurso. Those who refused to follow the Synod into this union with another body of Christians, as Dr Marshall and the part of his congregation adhering to him did, to whom the property was given by the Court of Session, must, in the present case, be held as having forfeited all right to a stone of the property. This is a strange kind of reasoning. There is no name for it that we know. And yet Lord Ardmillan, with all his penetration and judgment, has somehow been induced to go out of his way to give a specimen of it for the edification of the learned and illiterate.

It is as clear as day that the Free Church party at Thurso are in the precise predicament in which Craigie and his party were at Kirkintilloch. They follow their respective Synods into union with another body of Christians. And equally clear that the Original Seceders at Thurso are in the same position morally as Dr Marshall and the party of the congregation adhering to him were. They have stood by the position which they formerly occupied, and refused to follow the Synod—the Synod, too, of a dubious majority—into union with another body of Christians. There is this difference, no doubt, in the case of *Craigie v. Marshall*—there was only an attempt to withdraw the property from Dr Marshall and those adhering to him, whereas in this case there has been a successful seizure of the property. But this cannot alter the case, either in a moral or legal aspect, unless it were held to be an axiom that the man who attempts to commit robbery, but fails in the attempt, is guilty, but he who commits

robbery with success is innocent, which would be a revival of the old Spartan ethics, according to which theft, if dexterously executed, was no crime.

As Lord Ardmillan's Note is so much occupied in disquisitions as to the intrinsic merits of the difference between the Free and Original Secession Churches, it seems necessary that we should here *reiterate* the principle, that, unless the objects to which property is devoted are unlawful, it is not the province of courts of law, and lies not within their jurisdiction, to decide as to the worthiness or importance of the objects to which property has been bequeathed, or for which it has been procured. This principle his Lordship himself announces (p. 2), and this, as we have seen, is expressly stated by the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, in his deliverance in the Toberdonny case, in these words, already quoted—“*This court has nothing to do with the reasonableness or unreasonableness of the restrictions which may have been imposed by Original Seceders. It has only to look to the terms of the trust, and see whether they have been violated.*”

Did it belong to civil judges to determine as to the merits of the objects to which property was bequeathed or made over, and the character of the reasons by which parties were influenced, in making assignments of property, their duties would be far more than doubled; and in many cases, and as to ecclesiastical property in particular, the field of inquiry would be so wide and intricate, that it would be impossible to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. Were this new principle recognized—which Lord Ardmillan has *practically* adopted in his Note, in elaborate endeavours to *explain away* the differences between the Free and Original Secession Churches—dubiosity would be thrown on the tenures by which the whole property of the country is held.

We hold that what Lord Ardmillan had to do in this case was to see whether *a difference did exist* between the conflicting parties, and that that difference had been created by the step taken by the defenders in joining the Free Church. Moreover, even though it could not have been shown that the party joining the Free Church had resiled from any principle or doctrine of the Original Secession; as it could not have been denied, on any pretence whatever, that the Free Church party had *changed* their ecclesiastical position; and as Original Seceders had never acknowledged the Free Church to be the Church from which they had seceded, they would have been under no obligation to enter into union with her, and ought not to have been held as having forfeited all right to the property for refusing to do so.

We shall only remark here, farther, that while the Lord Ordinary is at so much pains in stating the argument of the defenders, that the defenders considered the Free Church—which dates her existence from 1843, as may be seen in her own Acts *passim*—as the Church of Scotland, to the first free, faithful, and reforming General Assembly of which the first Seceders appealed, as if it had an important bearing on the legal decision of the question at issue,—he yet concludes in these remarkable terms—

“Whether the view so taken of the position of both churches, and of their histo-

rical and representative character as spiritual institutions, was in all respects correct, and especially in regard to the selection of the Free Church as the body to which the Seceders should return, *it is not necessary here to inquire; and on that point the Lord Ordinary expresses no judicial opinion.*" (The italics are our own.)

The Lord Ordinary declares that "it is not necessary to inquire" as to a point on which the defenders lay the greatest stress, and that he gives no judicial opinion regarding a point on which the argument of the defenders rests as its grand foundation, which he himself also labours strenuously to prove in his Note, without which—they themselves being judges—the whole fabric must fall down as a heap of ruins; and yet he gives a decision out and out in their favour, as if all were as clear as day. It is deeply to be lamented that a judge, of such high character and standing as Lord Ardmillan unquestionably is, ever came to be placed in such a predicament, and that, if the rules of the court admit such a course, he did not decline to sit as judge in such a cause, and ask that it should be debated at the bar of some one of his compeers.

MEMORANDA.

Readers will observe that the pages referred to, in quoting from Lord Ardmillan's Note, are not those of the *Magazine*, but of the Interlocutor and Note in the law paper, and that it is from the sixth edition of the Testimony of United Original Seceders that the quotations are taken, and the pages of that edition that are referred to.

It may be stated here, also, that the argument is nearly throughout so conducted, that the whole is made to depend on authentic authoritative documents, either quoted or distinctly referred to, and scarcely anything left to depend on the mere authority of the writer.

APPENDIX.

MAJORITY.—Since what has been stated (p. 5 of Remarks) as to the majority, to which the Lord Ordinary attaches so much importance, was put to the press, the following things have been reported to us as notorious facts, which several respectable parties, mentioned by name, are prepared to attest:—1st, That there were *six* elders in the congregation of Thurso—not *five*—and that only *two* of these joined the Free Church. 2d, That no intimation was made, in calling the meeting of Session, at which the proposal of acceding to the Free Church was carried by the casting vote of the Moderator, that such important business was to be brought before that meeting of Session. 3d, That the adherents of the Free Church party resided chiefly in the town of Thurso, where the meeting of the congregation was held on the 7th of June, 1852,—whereas the adherents of the Original Secession party were chiefly in the country; a considerable number of them at the distance of ten, fifteen, and twenty miles from Thurso. This shows very distinctly the advantage given to the Free Church party by calling the meeting of the congregation of this date within a few hours of the intimation, instead of giving ten free days—being called at about four o'clock on Sabbath, and held on Monday at eleven or twelve o'clock. And yet this is the date to which the Commissioner, Mr Steuart, seems to have been tied down, in deciding whether the Free Church or Original Secession party have the majority of the congregation. 4th, That an elder would have been sent from Thurso congregation to the Synod which met at Glasgow in 1852, had not the minister, Mr Burn, pledged himself to vote for delay, and said it was no use to incur the expense of sending an elder. The words of the report sent us are—"That while a meeting of managers and elders was sitting ready to appoint an elder to the Synod, a deputation was sent to Mr Burn, to which he stated 'it was of no use to incur expenses, for he was to vote for delay.'" 5th,

That the "Sabbath he returned from the Synod, he stated, from the pulpit, that matters had come to that crisis that it was of no use to vote for delay."

But Mr Burn, instead of urging delay, urged on the crisis by being the *first* who appended his signature to the overture. It thus appears that, had not means been used to prevent an elder from being sent from Thurso to the Synod, the Synod would have been equally divided, so that it would have been left to the Moderator to decide; and Mr Burn being Moderator, he could not have voted for the motion before the Synod, consistently with his pledge to the elders and managers at Thurso, and, consequently, the motion for the overture would *not* have been carried. This demonstrates that the Free Church party owe their Synodical majority to the means of a very doubtful character, now mentioned.

This, along with what is stated before as to illegal votes, renders the majority—of which the Lord Ordinary makes so great account, in stating the grounds of his Interlocutor—a pre-eminently dubious foundation on which to rest a decision in a "court of law." With his sentiments, as to the influence of a majority in legal findings, Lord Ardmillan's judgment must be adverse to that of the Court of Session regarding the *quoad sacra* or extension churches; and he must be of opinion that, in all cases in which the majority of the congregations in these churches adhered to the Free Church, the whole property ought legally to have been given to the Free Church party.

AYR HOME MISSION.

THE Annual Missionary Meeting of the Ayr Congregation of United Original Seceders was held on Monday evening, 26th January last. It took place earlier than last year, owing to an alteration in the communion season. The attendance of the congregation was very good for the season of the year, and all present appeared to feel a deep interest in the mission work.

The Rev. George Stevenson, Kilwinning, presided, and opened the meeting with praise and prayer. The Chairman having stated the object of the meeting, the Secretary read the minutes of last meeting, and the Home Mission Committee's Third Annual Report. The Rev. John Robertson moved the adoption of the Report. He alluded, at some length, to the several points of the Report, enforced its statements, and exhorted and encouraged the congregation still to persevere in this work of faith.

Though now without a missionary, our humble efforts, by means of the tracts and district meetings, may be accepted and blessed by Him who can make the smallest means accomplish great results. The first missionaries to many foreign lands had laboured far longer without the encouragement of as much visible success. The motion was seconded by Mr Andrew Paterson, put to the meeting by the Chairman, and carried unanimously. Mr James Miller, in a speech replete with sound views of the Church's duty, introduced and moved the following resolution:—

"That this congregation is feelingly alive to the growing necessity for home mission efforts on the part of the Church; and being convinced that Seceders are under peculiar obligations to spread the gospel in our own land, and extirpate error, resolve to continue the mission work, in the meantime, in the departments of tract distribution and district prayer meetings, and to use every proper means to procure the services of a missionary." Mr William Jamieson seconded the resolution, and it was unanimously carried.

After passing votes of thanks to the Chairman and to the Secretary, the meeting was closed with devotional exercises by the Chairman.

REPORT OF MISSION WORK.

Your Committee, in presenting the Third Annual Report of mission operations, is placed in a peculiar position, and feels the responsibility of having to report past transactions, and indicate what should be done in the future. It is now known to all that the translation of your late missionary, Mr Ritchie, to the pastoral charge of the congregation at Colmonell, has suspended, for the present, the most important part of the mission work, and left those amongst whom he laboured destitute of spiritual instruction and care. However much the translation of Mr Ritchie may be hailed, as fitted to promote the good of the Secession cause, the condition of those who

have thereby been deprived of his ministrations cannot but be viewed with feelings of deep commiseration, especially when we consider the apparent improbability of his place being speedily supplied.

From the particulars of mission work, which your Committee is privileged to report, it will be seen that your late missionary's field of operations was gradually extending, and the good effects of his labours becoming more apparent, while an attachment to his person and ministrations continued to grow amongst the people.

During the nine months Mr Ritchie laboured here, since the last annual meeting, he visited, in addition to his allotted district, a very destitute part of Cross Street. He prayed with and exhorted the inhabitants of every dwelling, and left one of Mr Drummond's tracts. He also visited nearly all the families in New Prestwick, from which many of his hearers on Sabbath came, and prayed with and exhorted them all to turn unto the Lord with pure hearts. It is highly gratifying to know that these visits were hailed with delight by the people. They said the like had not been among them for many years. In addition to his systematic visitations, Mr Ritchie attended fifty-seven sick persons. Of these eighteen are dead, and twenty-six of the whole number would have had little or no pastoral care but for the provision thus made by the congregation.

When not supplying vacant congregations, Mr Ritchie preached every Sabbath forenoon in Weaver Row, and, as often as circumstances permitted, in the afternoon at New Prestwick. The attendance at the former place was between twenty and thirty, and at the latter from forty to fifty persons—the majority of whom had not formerly waited on the means of grace. At these meetings, the suitability of the subjects of discourse to the spiritual and mental condition of persons present was sometimes striking. On one occasion, when the Godhead and incarnation of Christ was the subject of discourse, an avowed Socinian was present. When the everlasting punishment of those who despise the gospel was shown to be a doctrine of the Bible, an universalist was a hearer. When the will-worship and superstitions of the Church of Rome was shown to be sinful and delusive, a Papist was among the audience. One instance more: when the subject of discourse was the election of grace, a poor woman was present, to whom that doctrine had long been a stumbling-block; but the clear exhibition of the truth then made by your missionary, convinced her that, instead of being an obstacle to faith, it is most encouraging to the believer.

The three weekly prayer meetings were continued till Mr Ritchie's departure, when the two conducted by him were given up. The one in Gordon Street, conducted by Messrs Miller and Jamieson, is still maintained, and has an average attendance of nine persons. These brethren deserve great praise for their unwearied perseverance in this labour of love—sacrificing many personal gratifications to the faithful discharge of their duty to the mission. At present there are three hundred tracts in circulation. This duty continues to be regularly performed by twenty young ladies, belonging to the congregation, with the zeal and perseverance characteristic of the sex; and their labours have all along been a most important auxiliary to those of your late missionary. The people continue to receive their weekly calls with pleasure, and tell them sometimes of their joys and sorrows. Since Mr Ritchie left, many have expressed their deep regret that he had gone from amongst them stating that we never know the value of any blessing till it is taken away. In one instance, a woman, who attended one of Mr Ritchie's meetings, said she was exceedingly sorry he had left, as his meetings were the only places of religious instruction and worship a person in her circumstances could attend; and she always took her children with her, who were regularly catechised by Mr Ritchie, and got from him verses of scripture to commit to memory.

The preceding is a very brief outline of the past year's labours, and some of its visible results. What effect the good seed sown may have had on the hearts of those among whom it was cast, can only be known to Him whose "eye seeth and his eyelid try the children of men." Some good has been achieved; and it is deeply to be regretted that we cannot find a missionary to follow up the work so well begun and carried on by Mr Ritchie. Few could have opened up the field in such a masterly manner as he has done, and gained the ear and affections of the people so completely. Seldom, indeed, amidst the numerous visits he paid to the wretched abodes of the ignorant and the vicious, did he receive a surly answer, or meet with a rebuff. His gravity and the kindness of his manners commanded respect, and secured a

ready ear to the words of wisdom with which his lips were always prepared to feed them. Altogether, we could not have got one better fitted to act as pioneer to the inroads of the light of truth into the dismal regions of society; and could we immediately get one to enter upon his labours, and water the seed sown, his duty would be comparatively easy, and the ultimate result of the mission work—as a means, in the hand of the Spirit, of regenerating and elevating those who have lapsed into a state of vice and indifference to their spiritual interests—might soon, in some measure, be attained. Though, to appearance, our fond wishes are far from being attained, let us not lose heart, far less think of giving up the work. He who, by refreshing showers and genial sunshine, causes the fruits of the earth to grow and ripen to the harvest, can thrust forth labourers to gather it in. Let us pray God to put it into the hearts of some sons in our Zion to devote themselves to Him in the work of spreading His truth, and testifying for the honour of His great name among those in our land by whom it has for a long period been so greatly dishonoured. This work we, as Seceders, are pre-eminently bound to engage in. In our Covenants and Solemn League—which we firmly maintain still bind these lands—we have sworn to use all the scriptural means within our reach to extirpate every form of error and vice from our beloved country; and how can we do it if we shut ourselves within the walls of our narrowed watch-tower, and never cast a single dart of truth into the wider domains of the enemy without? Assuredly, if we altogether hold our peace, God will raise up witnesses to prophesy in the streets of our cities from some other quarter. The path of safety, as well as of duty, is to march into the enemy's camp with all the force we can muster, and put forth our utmost efforts "to deliver the prey from the mighty and the captives from the terrible." If we sleep at our post, the sower of mischief will not. He may scatter the seeds of discord amongst us before we are aware, and dissipate the little strength that remains. Let us, ere it be too late, nerve our confessedly feeble arm by active service in the cause of our great Master, and "He will bless us, and that right early." But if we wrap our one talent in a napkin, even that, be assured, will be taken from us.

GENERAL RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

KARENS.

As the work of God, which has been, and is advancing among the *Karens*, in different parts of the Burmese Empire, is the most interesting in the whole missionary field, we are glad to furnish our readers with some farther particulars, as furnished in the January number of the *News of the Churches*:—

"The concluding letter of the series, from which we have already given much interesting information, relates the manner in which Christianity was preserved in the Bassein district during the exile of the missionaries, the great enthusiasm with which their return was hailed, and the rapid progress made in the building up of a Christian church in this and other districts since 1851:—

"The Rev. Mr Kincaid was at Ava at this time (1836), and had a small congregation of believers under his care. Among them was a young Burman of rank, one of whose sisters was a maid of honour to the Queen there. Hearing that her brother had renounced idolatry, she tried all her powers of persuasion first, and, when that failed, of petty persecution, to win him back to the faith of his fathers. At length, thinking the matter hopeless as long as he remained under the influence of the missionary, she exerted her influence with the Queen to get him a post under Government in some distant province.

"Was it chance alone which led the King to make this young Burman *Governor of the Karens in Bassein*?

"Full of sorrow at leaving his home and his Christian brethren, for a province nearly 500 miles off, where he little expected to find any like-minded with himself, the young Governor left Ava. He had not been long installed in this new dignity, when his Burmese officials brought some mean-looking men from the jungles before

him, whom they charged with worshipping a strange god. 'What god?' was his first question. 'They call him the *Eternal God!*' was the reply; but to their astonishment, their new judge could not see that this was wrong, and ordered the poor Christian Karens, for such they were, to be set free. It is not difficult to imagine the feelings under which they must have returned to their jungle homes, or the curiosity and wonder which their tale must have created among their people.

"But when the rumour got abroad that this new judge not only tolerated the religion of Jesus, but observed the Sabbath-day, and would not work on it, they no longer doubted but that he was a Christian. He immediately put an end to all persecutions on account of religion: how far he directly encouraged it I know not; but during the two years of his rule at Bassein, the gospel made such progress, that at the end of that time there were upwards of two thousand reported by the native preachers as converted souls.

"In this manner did the Church rise amid the jungles at Bassein, and in the delta of the Irrawaddy: it was entirely the work of a native agency, as far as human instrumentality was employed; and, perhaps, like the earliest disciples in the Church of Ephesus (Acts xix. 2), those of Bassein had a very limited knowledge of the principles of Christianity; yet they believed that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners—that they were sinners, and that therefore he came to save them; and they were not ashamed to confess him, even at the cost of oppressions, the like of which among British Christians would sift the Church, perhaps, in a measure we little suspect.

"An interesting illustration of the hold which the gospel took upon them, is the fact that when Bassein fell into our hands in 1852, there were found upon the bodies of many of the slain, among its defenders, little books, in the Burmese character, but evidently not of Burmese origin; and it proved, upon inquiry, that the owners of these had been Karen Christians, who, compelled to serve in the Burmese army, had carried with them to the last those portions of the Bible or tracts which had afforded them consolation for this life, and instruction for the attainment of life everlasting.

"So very favourable for the preaching of the gospel was the field at Bassein reckoned, that, as soon as tranquillity was restored after the last war, two missionaries were located there, who set vigorously to work in consolidating the Church, which had never previously enjoyed efficient superintendence. By the Divine blessing, the progress of the gospel has continued in a manner unexampled, perhaps, since the days of the Apostles. Of their own accord have the converts established among themselves a Home Missionary Society, for sending native missionaries to preach the gospel among Karens inhabiting places inaccessible to the American missionaries. At the town of Bassein they hold quarterly meetings of pastors and deputies, from all the different congregations in the district, for the regulation of the affairs of the Church. At one of these, in October, 1854, which was attended by about forty Karen preachers (representing upwards of fifty different congregations, and five thousand communicants), the following resolution, emanating entirely from themselves, was carried by a unanimous and hearty vote:—

"We are agreed that, for preachers, pastors, and ordained ministers, we shall expend no more of the money of our American brethren. So far as there is occasion to help to support them, we will do it ourselves. But for books and schools we greatly need help, and request that our dear brethren in America will continue to aid us in these things."

"At one of these meetings, held in July, 1855, the treasurer of the Home Missionary Society reported a balance of nearly 500 rupees in his hands; and for the ensuing quarter it was agreed to support from the funds of this Society eighteen native preachers, and six native missionaries, on salaries varying from five to ten rupees per month, and the six missionaries were to be employed in addition to six previously sent to labour in the district of Tounghoo. (I may take this opportunity of correcting an error made in the figures quoted in my letter to you of 18th January, wherein the number of Christians in the Bassein district is stated as 500, when it should have been 5000, a mistake originating in the letter from which the figures were quoted.)

"It must not be supposed, however, that the triumphs of the cross were confined to the district of Bassein alone. They were no less remarkable in those of Rangoon, Shway-goen, and Tounghoo; at present, however, I will only add a few particulars relative to its success in the Rangoon district."

"The Rev. Mr Vinton, a very able and zealous missionary, had laboured with success there in 1837, before he was forced to leave the field to Ko Tha-byu and some other valuable native preachers; and, by the blessing of the Lord of the vineyard, the seed thus scattered in that corner of it brought forth very abundant fruits. For many years the Christians there, as in Bassein, were wholly without the personal teaching of the missionaries, and were dependent for instruction on a few native preachers only, and on the portions of the Bible and the tracts in their own tongue sent to them from Maulmain. Let me now quote from a letter before me, written by one of the most able and experienced of the missionaries who have ever fought for the cross on Burmese soil, as his eloquent words cannot but convey to your readers a vivid picture of the state of the Karen mind when the last war broke out:—

"Since the fall of Rangoon in April, 1852, the long pent-up fires in the Karen heart have burst forth; the last gun from the war-ships had not been fired on Shway-du-gong,* when a deputation of three Karens was hanging about the outskirts of the town, ready, as soon as the Burmese army had fled, to rush in and find the teacher. They did rush in, and amidst wide ruin, and amidst ten thousand foreigners, sought for the teacher and found him. Why this urgency? The churches had sent them, and night and day followed them with their prayers. Among their first inquiries, they asked, 'Will teacher Vinton come now?' They returned, and in three days more, forty Karens came in. They said, 'All are praying for their teachers, and also for the English.' They had even taught their little children to pray that the teachers might come. Heathen Karens had joined them in this prayer. Such faith moves mountains from their base; notwithstanding that the waves of anarchy were rolling over them, and the sword and famine wasting their numbers, there was hope in God, and earnest longing for the coming of Christ's kingdom. 'Let us arise and build!' was the cry of this long oppressed and enslaved, but now emancipated people. The records of every month from the 1st of May, 1852, up to the present time, are enough to awaken songs of praise to the God of missions in the bosom of the most slumbering church. Within this time 4000 have received the gospel in such a manner as to give evidence that their faith rests not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God, and not less than two-thirds of this number have been gathered in districts where Christ was unknown before."

"Would your readers know what proofs these Christians have given that their faith rests on deeper foundation than human wisdom? Let them consider the following quotation from a report lately issued by two missionaries who have for some years been labouring at Kimmendine, a suburb of Rangoon, the Rev. Messrs. Vinton and Brayton:—'We doubt not it will be gratifying to the friends of missions to know that the aggregate of the contributions of the Karen Christians alone during the past and present year, for the different departments of our work, amounts to nearly 4000 rupees, and that in addition to this they build all their own chapels, support their own village schools, and all the older churches pay the salaries of their own native pastors."

"Thirteen of the lads attending a school taught by these missionaries received instruction in surveying (among other branches of knowledge), so far as to be able to accept some temporary government employment during the vacation from school; when it was over, one of them brought with him from the jungles two or three Karen inquirers after the truth, who had been awakened by the teaching of a Karen preacher, whom this lad had taken with him *at his own expense*, that he might carry the gospel tidings to those of his race inhabiting the district in which his duties lay, and each of the other lads similarly employed brought the half of his earnings during that period, and voluntarily gave them to the missionaries for the support of this school."

"At the close of 1851, there were seventeen Karen congregations in this district, with a membership of between 800 and 900 souls: there are now forty-one congregations in it, containing nearly 2000 communicants."

"In the districts of Tounghoo and Shway-geen the progress of the gospel has been still more rapid, though its success has not been tested so thoroughly as at Rangoon and Bassein. This, however, must form the subject of another letter."

TURKEY.

In the following quotation of a speech of Dr Hamlin, who has long

: The name of the great pagoda of Rangoon, meaning "The royal sword sheathed."

laboured as a missionary in Turkey, he shows, with considerable force of argument, that the most probable means of effecting the regeneration of this wide empire, is by having a change wrought on the Armenian population in their conversion to right views of divine truth :—

“Great success,” he said, “had attended the formation of Protestant Churches in the Armenian community. There now existed in the Turkish Empire thirty-one evangelical churches, and others would be formed as soon as they had the means of placing over them native pastors. It was also a singular fact that the Mussulmans protected the Protestant Armenians from the persecution of their own people. This the Mussulmans did, because they said that the Protestant Armenians were not given to idolatry. Many instances might be adduced in which the Cross was under the protection of the Crescent. What had been the influence of this work on the Mohametan mind? When it was commenced, the Mussulman mind was closed against the approach of Christian truth. For six years they had one missionary whose sole attention was directed to that one object—the finding of some avenue to the Mussulman intellect; but he found none, and gave up the work in despair. Now, however, the Mussulmans declare the Armenian Church to be idolatrous, and protected the Protestants who came out of that Church solely on the ground that they had given up idolatry. The prevalent opinion, however, of the Turks was, that Christianity was nothing less than an authorized system of fraud. It was a singular fact that a person could not enter a coffee-house in Constantinople, to which the Armenians and Greeks resorted, without hearing them boast of the manner in which they had cheated the Turks. If the Turk was spoken to in reference to the absurdities of the Koran, his reply would be, ‘Who are they that take flour and water, mix them together, and make wafers of them—who put these wafers to the mouths of the people, bidding them bow down and worship them, believing them to be the body and blood of their God?’ No language was strong enough in the mouth of the Turk to express his abhorrence and indignation of the doctrine of transubstantiation. But when the Protestant Churches began to be formed in Turkey, the first thing which the Turks noticed was, that they were free from idolatry, and that their members were honest and upright men. There was a general confidence in the honesty of the Protestants. At the present moment more than a hundred volumes of the Scriptures in the Turkish language were disseminated every month amongst the Turks. The great problem of the Turkish Empire was one that could only be solved by pure Protestant Christianity; and after referring to the traits of the Turkish character, observed that it was Christianity alone that would sanctify and ennoble whatever was beautiful in that character. Having referred to the obstacles which the idolatrous doctrines and ceremonials of the Armenian and Greek Churches placed in the way of a Mussulman embracing Christianity, Dr Hamlin said that the Turks had been greatly struck with the pure doctrines and lives of the Armenian converts, and that this had produced a great impression upon them, which was shown by the fact that they now bought copies of the Scriptures, and read them. They paid for more than a hundred copies of the Scriptures in Constantinople alone; and one of their colporteurs in Syria sold seventy copies of the Scriptures in Arabic to the Mussulmans who spoke that language. In short, wherever there was a missionary station, or wherever there was a Protestant Armenian Church, there the Mussulman population were seeking for copies of the Bible. After narrating some instances to show how Turkish prejudices had been broken down in this way, and how the very governors sometimes exerted their influence to prevent the colporteurs being interfered with when disposing of their books, Dr Hamlin said it had happened on several occasions, that, when the idolatrous Armenians anathematized and cast out their converted brethren, and had resorted to persecution, the Turks had become the protectors of the latter. On one occasion he had himself been protected by a volunteer guard of Mussulman soldiers, who, on parting with him, commended him to the protection of Allah. In one place the idolatrous Armenians were engaged in destroying the church and houses of the Protestant Armenians, when the women turned out in a body, and drove off their assailants, assigning as their reason that the parties assailed did not indulge in idolatrous practices. The operations of the Armenian Mission had produced great influence on the Mohametan mind, inasmuch that the missionaries could now speak to a Mussulman on the subject of Christianity,

and the truth had not been wholly inoperative amongst them. After stating several cases where Turks had embraced Christianity, the rev. doctor said, that in other cases where they had not proceeded that length, they had declared their want of faith in Mohamet. In one city there were as many as eighty persons who had done so; in another place, twelve or fifteen persons attended the Protestant Armenian service; in a third place, four Turkish families declared their disbelief in Mohametanism. In short, wherever there was a Protestant Armenian body, the Mohametan had been reached; and this was a state of matters encouraging in the utmost degree. They had three elements of Protestantism now introduced into Turkey—a free press, free schools, and free churches; and this, with the Bible, was all that was required to carry out their principles. Hitherto, the Turks having witnessed the Roman Catholic form of Christianity, looked upon it as idolatrous and absurd; but now that they have witnessed Protestantism, they found it free from idolatry, and a religion of sound integrity. This impression of the reliable integrity of the Protestant Armenians had produced a deep impression on the minds of the Turks. If Englishmen were to attempt to preach Protestantism among them, it would arouse their constitutional jealousy and fanaticism; but if they could evangelize the Armenians, they were so intimately associated with the Turks, that their principles would be disseminated among the Turks. If, therefore, the great problem was how to Christianize Turkey, he believed the way to solve it would be to spread the truth among the Armenians. Direct missions to Turkey would fail; but if they brought the three millions of Armenians in Turkey to embrace the principles of Christianity, it would influence the whole empire, and each Protestant Armenian, in fact, would become a missionary to the Turk. Evangelize the Armenians, and they would evangelize Turkey."

ECCLIASTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

PERTH AND ABERDEEN PRESBYTERY.

This court met at Perth on the 5th January.—Rev. Thomas Manson, Perth, Moderator. Mr John Barr, called to the congregation at Coupar-Angus, delivered a popular sermon from Isaiah lv. 1, and a homily from Phil. iii. 8. He also read an exercise, with additions, from Phil. ii. 2; and was examined as to his acquaintance with Church history, and his skill in the original languages of the Bible. Mr Barr having now finished all the parts of trial prescribed by the Presbytery, with a view to his ordination at Coupar-Angus, the question was put,—"Sustain the trials separately and *in cumulo*;" carried unanimously to sustain. The Presbytery likewise agreed that his settlement take place at Coupar-Angus on Tuesday, the 3d day of February next.

Mr John M'Kay, called upon to be assistant and successor to the Rev. John Aitken, gave the following discourses, being portions of the trials which the Presbytery had prescribed in view of his settlement at Aberdeen—viz., exercise, with additions, from Heb. ii. 9. Thesis, "An sit Jesus Nazarenus verus Christus;" a homily from Jer. ii. 2; and a popular sermon from Rom. v. 8. He was likewise examined in Church history and the original languages of the Old and New Testament Scriptures. Mr M'Kay, having now delivered to the Presbytery all the trials assigned him, it was moved that they be sustained separately and *in cumulo*; which motion was unanimously agreed to. The Presbytery also appointed Mr M'Kay's ordination to take place at Aberdeen on Thursday, the 5th day of February next.

ORDINATION AT COUPAR-ANGUS.

The Perth and Aberdeen Presbytery met on Tuesday, the 3d of February, for the purpose of ordaining Mr John Barr, preacher of the gospel, to the office of the holy ministry, and the pastoral inspection of the congregation of United Original Seceders, Coupar-Angus. The Rev. Dr Blakely, Kirkintilloch, preached from 2 Cor. v. 20—"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The Rev. Thomas Manson, Perth, after narrating the steps that had

been taken with a view to the ordination, put the questions of the Formula to Mr Barr, and presided at the ordination; and the Rev. George Roger, Anchinleck, addressed the newly ordained minister and people, and afterwards concluded the solemn services by prayer and praise. Mr Barr received a cordial welcome from his people on their retiring. On the following Sabbath, he was introduced to his congregation by Mr Roger, who preached in the forenoon and evening; and in the afternoon Mr Barr commenced his public ministrations among his people by preaching from Deut. v. 27—"Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it and do it." It was gratifying to observe such a good attendance on the ordination day; and we understand that it was equally so on the forenoon and afternoon of the following Sabbath, while on the evening of that day the church was crowded. Our friends at Coupar-Angus have the greatest cause of gratitude for the happy settlement they have now obtained. The cordiality manifested by them on the occasion was most laudable on their part, and highly encouraging to their pastor; and it is our earnest desire that the blessing from on high may rest both on him and them, and that the work of the Lord may prosper among them.

ORDINATION AT ABERDEEN.

The Perth and Aberdeen Presbytery of United Original Seceders met in Skene Terrace Church, Aberdeen, on Thursday, 5th February, when Mr John M'Kay, preacher of the gospel, was ordained to the office of the holy ministry, and pastoral inspection of the congregation, as colleague and successor to the Rev. John Aitken.

The opening devotional services were conducted by the Rev. William Robertson, Dundee. The Rev. William Aitken, Midholm, preached an eloquent and impressive discourse from 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16—"For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life." The Rev. Robert Craig, Kirriemuir, recapitulated the steps of procedure, put the questions of the Formula to Mr M'Kay, and offered up the ordination prayer. The Rev. Dr Blakely, Kirkintilloch, delivered the charges to pastor and people. The Rev. Thomas Hobart, Carlisle, concluded the devotional exercises. At the close, Mr M'Kay received a hearty welcome from the members of the congregation.

On the following Sabbath, the Rev. Dr Blakely conducted the induction services, having preached an appropriate and touching discourse upon the permanency of ecclesiastical office, notwithstanding the removal of office-bearers, from Num. xx. 27, 28—"And Moses did as the Lord commanded: and they went up into mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron died there in the top of the mount: and Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount." In the afternoon Mr M'Kay preached an able and suitable discourse upon the ministerial commission, from Ex. iii. 14—"And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." In the evening Dr Blakely preached a discourse upon the ministerial reward, from 1 Peter v. 4—"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Upon each occasion there was a large and deeply interested audience, the appearance of which must have been very gratifying to Mr Aitken, after forty-five years of ministerial labour, and highly encouraging to Mr M'Kay, upon his induction to public office.

We congratulate our revered father, Mr Aitken, upon this interesting occasion, when he has obtained a fellow-labourer in the vineyard, and also his congregation, in having thus obtained a colleague and successor, ere the pastoral tie was dissolved. We trust that our brethren will take courage, and show themselves, as heretofore, zealous in maintaining and defending the principles of the Covenanted Reformation.

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GOD'S GOODNESS AND MAN'S INGRATITUDE VIEWED
IN RELATION TO TEMPORAL MERCIES.

THE atheism of the heart discovers itself in a very striking manner in man's inattention to the dispensations of Providence in general, and, in particular, in his ingratitude for the temporal mercies bestowed upon him. This was one of the heinous sins with which God's ancient people were chargeable, and for which they were justly visited by him on many occasions with scarcity or famine. For the sins of those who dwell therein, God turns fat lands into barrenness. Accordingly, we find that he frequently threatened to deprive his ancient people of the bounties of Providence, on account of their ingratitude for past favours. Thus he spake by his prophet Hosea,—“She did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal : therefore will I return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness.” Among the many evils that abound at the present time, none of the least are ingratitude for temporal mercies, and an abuse of these mercies by the application of them to improper and sinful purposes : and God has not unfrequently, even in our day, severely corrected us for these sins by times of scarcity arising from unpropitious seasons. What aggravates the evil, moreover, is, that comparatively few men seem to be laying these things to heart, or saying, Where is the Lord, our Maker, who giveth songs in the night ? Multitudes of the present generation do not even acknowledge the God of Providence in such matters at all, or see that their sins are the causes of his contending. If what may be advanced in this paper on the subject should turn the thoughts of any of our readers to it, so as to lead them more carefully to regard the aspects of Providence in a moral point of view, our end in writing it will be gained.

It is an indisputable truth, that the fruits of the earth, for the support of man and beast, are God's property, and the bounties of his

providence to his creatures. It is he who gives us corn, and wine, and oil. This will appear if we consider that he is the Creator of all things. He at once made man, and the fruits of the earth for his support and comfort; and it deserves to be particularly noticed, as a special mark of his goodness, that he did not create man till he had replenished the earth with everything necessary for his subsistence. Man was made on the sixth day; but the earth was replenished for his reception with herbs and plants on the third, so that he found the harvest in a state of maturity for his use on his entrance into existence. "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so." He did not only form these at first by his creating power, but he also established the ordinances of nature for their propagation. For this purpose he conferred on the fruits of the earth a power of propagation, each after his kind. "The earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good." He also established the ordinances of heaven, so as to influence the earth as the receptacle of these seeds, in making them spring up and bring forth fruit in their season, that there might be food for man and beast. Thus, while he made the waters under the firmament to retire from the earth into an heap, and of these formed the sea, the lakes, and the rivers, he also formed the regions above the firmament as the repository of the waters above it, which, being collected in clouds, might distil in dew and rain, to mollify the earth, and make it fruitful. "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so." And as heat is as necessary as water to vegetation, so he made the sun—that great source of light and heat—to warm the earth, and to render it fruitful, together with the other luminaries of heaven, for signs and for seasons, and to give light upon the earth.

It will farther appear, if we consider that he upholds all things by the word of his power, and directs all these ordinances of heaven and earth, so as to accomplish the ends intended by them. His continued providence includes sustentation. He upholds all things by the word of his power. Were he to withdraw his supporting power for a moment, the earth, which furnishes us with food—the heavens, which supply the earth with warmth and moisture—would sink into a state of non-existence. It includes, also, government, or the direction of these second causes, so as to accomplish the ends intended by them. The earth is the fruitful mother of corn, wine, and oil, and all the necessities of life; but at his will fat lands are turned into barrenness. The waters collected above the firmament, distilled in dew and rain, mollify the earth, so as to make it fruitful; but it is owing to his providential government that the clouds do not drop down in water-spouts, which, instead of promoting vegetation, would destroy the earth, and spoil it of all its fruits. The sun, again, were it not the

continued providence of God, would burn up every green thing, instead of promoting vegetation by its genial heat. The influence of these second causes in blessing the springing of the earth, and crowning the hope of the husbandman with a plentiful harvest, all depends on the immediate agency and blessing of God. He is at the head of all these second causes, and he can make them subservient either to the destruction or abundance of the fruits of the earth. Thus he threatened, by adverse seasons, to deprive his ancient people of the fruits of the earth, by withholding his blessing upon these ordinances in nature for conveying food to man; and he again promises, upon their reformation, so to influence these second causes as to make the earth bring forth plentifully. "And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall bear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel."

It is alike an indisputable truth, that God so disposes of the instruments of his physical government, in regard to the seasons, as to promote the ends of his moral government. His moral administration in this world is made up of events of mercy and judgment, and he makes the seasons subservient to both. To manifest his goodness, and to leave men inexcusable, as well as to reward his own people for their fidelity in his service, he blesses the springing of the earth, and makes all the ordinances of heaven subservient for this purpose. In this way he does not leave himself without a testimony of his bounty and beneficence even in those regions which have no other guide but nature's light. "Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." By the same means, he testifies his approbation of the conduct of his professing people when they adhere faithfully to his cause and interests. Thus he promised to his ancient people that, in the way of their obedience to his commandments, their land should be fruitful: "Wherefore, said he, ye shall do my statutes and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety; and the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety. And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase; then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years." On the contrary, he punishes wicked nations by unpropitious and adverse seasons. These can only be accounted for by the same overruling providence. The earth continues the same, yet it does not yield its increase. The ordinances of heaven remain; yet the same sun, which in other seasons only warms the earth and promotes vegetation, in such seasons burns up the fruits of the earth; or the rain, which in other seasons mollifies the earth, and multiplies the increase of the field, in such seasons is either withheld, or poured down in such quantities as to destroy the fruits of the ground. Thus God threatens to make the harvest an heap in the field in the day of trouble and desperate sorrow. Famine is one of God's great and sore plagues, which he sends to punish a froward and ungrateful people.

Israel knew not that God gave them corn, and wine, and oil; accordingly, he threatens to take away his corn in the time thereof, and his wine in the season thereof, and to recover his wool and his flax given to cover their nakedness.

It follows that the bounties of providence thus conferred, being God's property, should be received as such by us with gratitude, and used to his honour and glory. What we call our corn is his corn, and what we call our wine is his wine, for the reasons already assigned. He gives us the use of them, but the property remains with him. He is the sole lord and proprietor of all. Have any persons got their barnyards stored with corn to feed them, or their lofts with wool to clothe them? Remember, God says, it is my corn and my wool. Are their hills covered with cattle? Mark well that God claims as his the cattle upon a thousand hills. We are only stewards of his bounties, and fed at his table. What we possess, we possess by his gift. We are supported every day at his charge. He openeth his hand, and satisfies the wants of every living creature. This being the case, we should receive the bounties of his providence with the liveliest gratitude. These temporal mercies should in this way form a moral bond between us and our Creator. Even the ox and the ass discover a kindness to those who feed them: how much more ought man to recognize God as his bountiful benefactor on the receipt of every new mercy? Every created comfort is from God, and should be received with thanksgiving. Moreover, even when in our possession, it is God's property, and should be used to his honour. To confer it on our lusts, as they do who abuse God's good creatures by gluttony and drunkenness, is to convert them into the means of his dishonour, as well as their own disgrace. They are to be used, but not abused, and used for refreshing the body, so as to render it more fit for the discharge of religious duties, and not so as to surfeit and intoxicate, and thus render us unfit either for rational or religious acting. In short, since we are stewards of the bounties of providence, when God furnishes us with abundance, it is that we may lay it out for the relief of those who are in want. We are to serve the Lord with our substance—to do good, and to communicate; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

But such is the depravity of man, that, in many instances, he neither recognizes God as the author of these temporal benefits, nor lays them out for his honour. God gives rain and fruitful seasons as means even of making the poor benighted heathen feel after him; yet strange to tell, the charge on this subject by his prophet is brought against a people enjoying the light of divine revelation. "She" (that is God's visible Church) "knew not that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil." Persons living under the gospel dispensation enjoy even superior privileges to God's ancient people; yet there are many such practical atheists among them. They must be such who never look above second causes in relation to the seasons, whether favourable or adverse—they must be such who do not feel one sentiment of gratitude to God, even when he blesses them with plenty—they are such who use God's good creatures for gratifying their lusts. God blames

his ancient people for laying out their temporal substance in the worship of Baal; but they are equally criminal who lay it out in surfeiting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness. Such conduct in rational and intelligent beings sinks them below the beasts that perish. Few, if any, of these will eat or drink to excess; but man, by intemperance, is often the burial-place of God's mercies. Even the dullest of the lower creation feel grateful to those who feed them; but man often neither in thought nor in word recognizes that God who gives him all things richly to enjoy. Hence the whole creation is summoned in as witnesses against man's ingratitude. "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."

When this is the case, it is no way wonderful that God should visit men with unpropitious seasons, or otherwise deprive them of the necessities of life. Not wonderful! No; it is truly wonderful that this is not the case much more frequently than it is. If now or then—and that only in a partial degree—we are visited with an unfavourable season, we soon begin to complain; but we seldom consider that if God were to deal with us as we have sinned, every season would be unpropitious. Had we man to deal with, this would undoubtedly be the case. He soon becomes weary of giving at any rate; but he does not exercise patience at all with those who abuse the fruits of his beneficence. But God is kind even to the unthankful and the unholy, and sends rain upon the unjust and upon the just. God sees it necessary, however, for the vindication of his holiness and justice, and to show that there is a God who judgeth upon the earth, to visit an ungrateful and rebellious people with scarcity, or even sometimes with famine. Hence this is mentioned as one of his great and sore judgments. "For thus saith the Lord God, how much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the *famine*, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast." Accordingly, this judgment, we find, he not only frequently threatened, by his prophets, to send upon his ancient people, but actually did inflict it on them on several occasions. "And I also have given you," said he by Amos, "cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered." How terrible such an infliction would be, may be more easily conceived than described.

It deserves, moreover, to be particularly observed in this connection, that God has various ways of recalling the bounties of his providence, or depriving men of the benefit and comfort of them on account of their iniquities. These are never out of God's reach, so that he can recall them at any time, and in any way he pleases. He is the spring that sets all second causes in motion which serve to furnish us with

what is necessary for our temporal support ; and should he deny his influence, they must become powerless in a moment. How often has God, in righteous judgment, converted a hitherto fertile country into a barren waste ! " He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water-springs into dry ground, a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them who dwell therein." A people may plough and sow ; but if he withholdeth his blessing, the seed will perish below the clod, and never spring up or bring forth fruit. What palpable demonstrations of this truth have of late years been given to all the nations ! It is God who watereth the ridges of the earth abundantly, and setteth the furrows thereof : he maketh it soft with showers—he blesseth the springing thereof. He may favour the husbandman's endeavours with a fair braird, and yet little may be brought into the barnyard. When ready for the sickle, yea, even when cut down in the field, the prospects of the husbandman may be blasted, by shaking winds and rotting rains. In numerous parts of the country, during the past season, has not this actually been realized ? " In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish ; but the harvest shall be an heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow." The men of the world, when they have got their corn the length of the barn floor, may reckon all secure ; but even then God may require it of them. " The floor and the wine press," says he by his prophet Hosea, " shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fail in her." Even when made into bread, it is not beyond his reach ; yea, even when in the mouth or stomach, he may render it ineffectual for our bodily nourishment, and turn it into gall. Job xx. 14—" Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him." The bread we eat, or the water we drink, are only the means of our bodily nourishment. God's blessing upon them is the cause of it ; and when this is withheld, they prove destructive often, not only to health, but to life.

How absolute, therefore, is our dependence upon God for life, and all the means of sustaining it. How little do any rightly think of this, while the great majority in our midst live as though they were independent of God altogether. He is not in all their thoughts, and they are nowise concerned, though fed by his bounty and nourished at his table, to recognize him as their benefactor. How criminal and God-dishonouring such conduct is, is too apparent to be dwelt upon, as well as how grievous and God-provoking is the sin of abusing God's mercies by expending them on our lusts. How imperative, moreover, is the duty resting upon all of attending to God's frowns in providence, and especially with regard to the seasons, and confessing their numerous and heinous transgressions as the procuring causes of them. Never will prosperity, either external or internal, be our lot, until we are brought, both individually and collectively, ecclesiastically and nationally, to turn unto the Lord, acknowledge our iniquities before him, and, through grace, seek to walk in all his statutes and commandments to do them.

THE GLORY OF GOD DISPLAYED IN THE BUILDING UP OF ZION.

Psalm cii. 16—"When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory."

As to who the writer of this psalm was we are not definitely informed; but while it is denominated a prayer of, or for, the afflicted, it has obviously an allusion to the condition of the Church during the period of her Babylonian captivity. This is specially the case of the passage we have selected as the subject of our present remarks. Zion, or Jerusalem, in which Zion was included, was now in a dilapidated state. Its lofty walls and bulwarks were demolished; its palaces, which had adorned it, were levelled with the dust; and the temple, its greatest glory, was in ruins. But the time was not far distant when God would graciously appear, and restore this ancient seat of his gracious presence and holy ordinances to some measure of its former prosperity. The Lord had been displeased with his people for their sins, and, in correction, had brought upon them all these judgments and calamities; but he does not keep anger for ever, and, therefore, he would soon return in mercy, and build up what, in his holy indignation, he had cast down. The words are not to be confined, however, to the Old Testament Zion. They may be regarded as looking forward to New Testament times, and as applicable to the gospel Church. The Christian as well as the Jewish Church is in scripture called Zion, and may well be understood as included in the expression here. That the psalm has a reference to gospel days is indeed evident, from its being applied to Messiah in the epistle to the Hebrews. Often does the spiritual, like the literal Jerusalem, require to be repaired and built up. She is assailed, not only by persecutors, and other outward enemies, but by false teaching and heresy within; and thus her glory becomes eclipsed, and the divinely carved work of her constitution, and ordinances of salvation, and heavenly truths and doctrines, is broken down. But Jehovah, in his mercy and gracious sovereignty, always interposes in her behalf, and grants her such revivals and spiritual rebuilding as raise her up from her fallen condition, and sometimes even elevate her to higher degrees of strength and beauty. He restores to her the years that the locust and the canker-worm, and the caterpillar and the palmer-worm, have eaten; and all this he does in a glorious manner, and so that his glory is manifested in the view of both the Church and her enemies.

I. The first point to which, from the verse, we shall call the attention of our readers is, the *work* of building up Zion; and here it may be remarked, in the outset, that the Lord may be said to build her up, by maintaining in her a *succession of members*. The members of the Church are constantly removing. They continue not by reason of death. How many changes have all of us witnessed in her congregations? Both her ministers and people we find taken away. Were not God, therefore, to supply their places with others, she would, in a very little time, become extinct. She would soon be like those nations and cities of antiquity, which are known only in the page of history.

But as the process of removal goes on in her, and one after another is consigned to the dust, the Lord, as her preserver, and the promoter of her interests, graciously fills up the affecting blanks, and thus maintains her, as an organized and living society, from age to age. Generation after generation of her members pass away, but another generation always cometh. Our fathers, we are obliged to say, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? The greatest reformers, and most distinguished professors, have gone off the stage. But the Church God has never left without members or ministers. Instead of the fathers, he has taken the children, and will do so to the end of time. Though he should make a full end of every other society, he will not make a full end of Zion. Enemies have thought to destroy her, but they have ever been disappointed, and have found the means they employed against her produce the opposite effect. The more she was oppressed in Egypt, the more she grew and multiplied. The very blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the Church.

2. The Lord builds up Zion when he *reforms* her. The revelation she has received from him in his word is pure and perfect, and never stands in need of being reformed. It admits not of addition, diminution, or alteration. His word, as declares the Psalmist, is very pure. All its doctrines, and precepts, and institutions, are pure, without the smallest flaw or defect. Great attainments, too, in respect of conformity to the divine word, has the Church in various parts of the world made. This applies particularly to the Church of Scotland. During the period of her *First* Reformation, and especially in that of her *Second*, she was brought, by the good hand of God upon her, not only in doctrine, but in worship and government, wonderfully near to the "pattern shown in the mount;" and these attainments were consolidated by solemn vows to the Most High, in which she pledged herself to cleave to and maintain them. Often, however, is the Church found in an exceedingly impure and corrupt state. Heresies and errors, not only dishonouring to God, but of the most soul-ruining character, spring up in her. This has been sadly verified under the present as well as under the former economy. As the glory of the literal Zion was effaced, so is, frequently, the greater glory of the New Testament Church. Even from her highest elevations in scriptural purity she declines and falls. We require not to prove this by referring to the mournful declension in the Apostolic Churches, which went on till it issued in Popery. We have it demonstrated in the Churches of the Reformation; and, considering the height to which our Reformation was carried, in none more than in the Church of our own land. While there are propagated among us the most heterodox opinions, our sworn-to Reformation is repudiated, and our solemn vows to adhere to it trampled under foot. The beautiful structure which our reforming ancestors erected has been overthrown, and razed to the foundation. But the Lord, who is incessantly watching over the Church's interest, reforms her from her backslidings and corruptions. This, in his holy word, he has expressly promised—"I will purely," declares he, "purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin; afterward thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful

city;" and again, "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar: yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts." Nor are we without glorious instances of such church reform. The reformation from Popery in Europe, and from both Popery and Prelacy in Britain, are notable instances of this; and low as the Reformation cause now is, and extensively as error prevails, we have ground to expect that reforming times shall come, and that the purity once attained shall be revived and exceeded. We look not for the removal merely of Armenianism, and Socinianism, and Latitudinarianism, and such other flagrant heresies, but for the resurrection, *judicially*, of the whole of our covenanted standards, with an acknowledgment of the binding force of the Covenants themselves, by all ranks and classes in the land. Of the following prediction we expect the fulfillment in a gospel sense, and not in other lands merely, but in our own islands of the sea:—"In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping; they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, *saying*, come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." But may not all this work of reformation be well denominated building up Zion? It is just as really a building up of the holy city of the gospel Church, as the restoration of the walls and towers and temple of Jerusalem, after the return from captivity, and the reviving of the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish into the beautiful habitations and splendid palaces of former days, was a rebuilding of Zion literally considered.

3. The Lord builds up, in a glorious sense, the gospel Zion, when he *heals her mournful breaches or divisions*. In the literal Jerusalem, after its overthrow, there were many breaches. Once it presented a beautiful uniformity, and was a city "compactly built together;" but now one part was divided from another, and there was, both in its streets and walls, breach upon breach. But all this may be asserted also of the gospel Church. How united was she in her early days! After the Saviour's exaltation and the down-pouring of the Spirit's influence, she was characterized by uniformity of sentiment in regard to all the doctrines, laws, and ordinances of Christ's house. Her members spake all the same thing, and were perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. This was wonderfully and gloriously exemplified, too, on the back of the reformation from Popery, and particularly in the churches of Britain and Ireland, bound together by the same Solemn League and Covenant, and recognizing the same standards of faith. But the spiritual as well as the literal Jerusalem has had her breaches. All the blessed union and uniformity to which we have alluded has been marred; and seldom has the Church been more divided than at the present day. Altar is erected against altar. One is declaring, "Lo, here is Christ," and another, "Lo, he is there:" and the breaches are *wide* as well as *many*; and though division, carried the length of *ecclesias-*

tical separation, is often necessary to the maintenance of the truth, it is *considered in itself* a great evil. It not only mars the Church's beauty, but exposes her to the attacks of all hostile to her interests, and cripples her in every undertaking for the promotion of the Lord's cause. "Divide and conquer" is a maxim in literal warfare; and it will apply also to the armies of the Lamb. Divide them, and you put them more at the mercy of their foes. Zion's breaches, however, the Lord heals. This he promises, saying, "The watchman shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Union in the Church, indeed, is one of Christ's petitions for her, and which the Father, who heareth him always, cannot deny. "That they all," declares he, "may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Gloriously shall this union be realized in the latter day, when the lion, and the wolf, and the lamb shall dwell together; and when there shall be one fold and one shepherd; and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Nor when God heals Zion's breaches does he overlook any of the stones, either in her walls or foundation, that originally belonged to the building. He promotes peace in conjunction with truth, and never sacrifices principle to expediency. Unions frequently occur in which truth is compromised; but though God permits the compromise, he gives it not his sanction. Every scripture truth is a jewel in the crown of Christ, which on no consideration he can part with. The smallest truth is dear to him as the apple of the eye. When the Lord, in a word, heals the breaches of Zion, he unites in affection as well as in judgment. He does not give one *way* merely, but also one *heart*. He makes not the union, as some would have it, *all* affection, declaring it to be sufficient that her people be one in love. This would be to sanction the latitudinarianism which we have already seen he hates and condemns. But still, when he brings the Church to see eye to eye, he will cause them to love one another. Such a healing of all our present lamentable divisions the Lord shall certainly grant in his own time; and then there shall be a glorious building up of Zion.

4. The Lord builds up Zion when he *enlarges her*. In the building up of the literal Jerusalem that followed the return of the Church from Babylon, there was not only the healing of her breaches, but the adding of house to house, and street to street, so that more ground was taken in and occupied. But so does our covenant and gracious God proceed in building up the Zion of the gospel Church. The Church is, under the gospel, in respect of her boundaries, vastly different from what she was under the law. There she was confined to the one nation of Israel, but now she is as free to set up and observe her ordinances in Hindostan, and China, and Britain, as in Palestine. Neither at Jerusalem alone, nor on Mount Gerizim alone, is she *now* bound to worship the Father; but everywhere her worship will be accepted by him when presented in spirit and in truth. Hence the declaration to her by the prophet,—"*Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them*

stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles." This is just an injunction to the Church to extend herself, and a promise that she shall be enlarged. The heathens are promised, indeed, to Christ himself for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. The Church, too, has already been extended to many lands. God, in this cause, has been long building her up; so that we find her in countries, and on continents, and on islands, at the farthest extremities of the globe. Of this our own distinguished and highly favoured land is a striking and glorious instance. But still there is much room for her extension. As was said of the land of Canaan, before the Israelites fully possessed it, there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed. Many nations are still enveloped in heathen darkness, without a single ray of gospel light. God, therefore, requires still to build; and he shall graciously continue to do so till every part of the world be evangelized, and the gospel and its ordinances be enjoyed in every land. From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, the Saviour's name shall be yet great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense and a pure offering shall be offered to him. All the kingdoms of the world, being illumined by gospel light, and drawn by the supernatural and constraining influence of the Holy Ghost, shall submit to the sceptre of Immanuel, and become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

5. We shall only, on this point, add, that the Lord builds up Zion by the *conversion of sinners to Christ*. The literal Zion was re-established by the increase of its inhabitants. When overthrown by the Babylonians, it was deserted and left solitary; and the remnant that returned were so few, that they were apt to think that it would never, as in former times, be filled with citizens. But the prophet was commissioned to tell them that their fears as to this were groundless. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts," was his inspired message to them, "There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age; and the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." Now, the Lord builds up, in like manner, the spiritual Jerusalem, by the increase in her of the truly godly. While he supplies her with visible church members, continuing her visibly upon the earth, he brings many of these, by the divine power of his holy Spirit, to a saving interest in a crucified Redeemer. Saints in her are often few; and hence the prophet's exclamation,—“Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?” But God never allows her true and genuine members to become extinct. He always, even in the worst times, secures that there shall be this and that man born in Zion; and often does he cause conversions in her to abound. What a remarkable instance of this was there on Pentecost, when the foundation of the gospel Zion was just laid? Then thousands were converted in a day; and, in those days of Zion's extension and glory already alluded to, her true converts shall be mul-

tiplied beyond our comprehension. Beholding this in prospect filled the prophet with astonishment: "Who are these," he exclaimed, of sinners flocking to Christ in the gospel days,—“Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?” The same glorious truth is taught in the following figurative and prophetic lines:—“The city shall be flourishing; her citizens abound in number shall like to the grass that grows upon the ground.” The great object, indeed, of Zion's erection and continuance upon the earth, is the conversion of perishing souls, and the building of them up in holiness till they be fitted for heaven. It is the bringing of fellow-men from sin and misery to immortality; and in all our endeavours for the promoting of Zion's interests, we ought to have this specially in view.

In another paper, we shall consider the means which God employs in building up Zion, and the glory in which, when he does so, he appears.

COMMUNICATION FROM A REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

[The following paper, containing strictures on the sentiments expressed in a speech by the Rev. Mr M'Dermid, delivered at a meeting of the Glasgow branch of the Evangelical Alliance, which had been inserted, with special commendation, in the January number of the *Reformed Presbyterian Magazine*, was sent soon after to that periodical, but its insertion was refused. And, though reluctant to do anything which might even seem to weaken the bonds of friendship which ought to subsist between two branches of the witnesses for the Covenanted Reformation, we have felt constrained to give the communication a place in our pages, by respect to the principle which our correspondent advocates, and also from the consideration that the *Original Secession Magazine* is the quarter whence the defenders of such a principle might most naturally expect support and countenance in Scotland, at least, after being excluded from the organ of the Reformed Presbyterians. We are sorry, on various accounts, that those who have the management of that work have felt it to be their duty to deny a place in their pages to such a paper, in those times especially, when the tide of latitudinarianism is rising so high that almost all the churches seem on the eve of discarding, in practice, if not also in theory, a principle on which our fathers, and other witnesses for truth and purity, acted, and to which they attached great importance.—Ed. O. S. M.]

TO THE EDITOR OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

SIR,—In last number, you insert a speech by the Rev. Mr M'Dermid, delivered at a meeting of the Glasgow branch of the Evangelical Alliance, in which the following language is employed:—“The idea at one time entertained in this country, and very particularly in Scotland, was, that when we dissented from what we reckoned false and wrong in a church, we could not in any way afterwards fraternize with that church, without letting down our dissent. To be consistent, it was conceived we must turn our backs altogether on the church we reckoned ourselves bound to leave—upon its ministry and all its ordinances,—and keep en-

tirely aloof. This arose, in my opinion, from forgetting that, in dissenting from a church, we do not dissent from everything in that church, but only certain things we look upon as wrong and erroneous. It is from what we deem error that we dissent, while we leave behind us a church of Christ."

Now, if we do not misapprehend the meaning of this extract, it certainly seems to imply a sweeping condemnation upon the faithful witnesses of past ages—a condemnation which, though the speaker would make us believe he pronounces in gentleness and charity, is at the same time pronounced with a good deal of coolness and confidence. Nothing, indeed, is more easy, and nothing is more common, than to indulge in reflections upon the narrow, bigoted, and mistaken views of "Christ's faithful witnesses in these lands, whether martyrs under the late persecution, or such as have succeeded them in maintaining the same cause." It is a favourite theme with various classes—with learned men, and men not very learned—with grave and accomplished writers, and with profane scribblers. It is a staple commodity with novelists, and historians, and reviewers, and pamphleteers, and platform orators—down even to the writers of doggerel verse; and although each party claims for himself superior discernment for having pointed out the "mistaken" and "illiteral" notions of former ages, there is neither originality nor profundity of thought in the censorious reflection, it being but a reiteration of the stale and hackneyed rhyme of every age since the objects of this ridicule existed. It is even whispered that a degree of impatience of "former things" is beginning to manifest itself even in our own Church, and that some would have us to abandon our "old-fashioned notions," and conform more to the "advanced light and liberality of the present age;" and although we do not pretend to determine the extent of ground that exists for such a suspicion, we are pretty certain that the perusal of the speech referred to is not fitted to allay it.

Far be it from us to put implicit faith in the authority of fathers. We would call no man master, however eminent for wisdom and piety; still, when Mr M'Dermid publicly imputes to those who upheld Christ's testimony in Scotland for many a dark and dreary day mistaken ideas on the subject of dissent from corrupt churches, we have a right to expect that he will support his allegation by competent proof. He cannot imagine that an imputation so grave will pass muster on the ground of mere assertion. The parties referred to adduced cogent arguments in support of the views they held and acted upon in the matter of dissent; and we insist that the party who pronounces these views "mistaken," must adduce at least equally powerful arguments before we submit to his derision and imbibe his opinion. The proof desiderated is on several accounts due; for let it be observed, that it is not merely in an opinion, nor in an act or acts of administration, that he pronounces them "mistaken," but in what they, at least, regarded as solemn and settled principles; for it is the undoubted fact that, while they were ready to hold communion with all Christians in what was common to them in their private Christian capacity, in order to be consistent they felt themselves bound to "keep aloof from the ministry and the ordinances" of

the church from which they had dissented, and against whose corruptions they had lifted a protest. This principle they held firmly; and to their faithful adherence to it, under the divine blessing, was it owing that their testimony was so effective, and the very *existence* of their Church preserved in some localities. Then we cannot, in harmony with the confidence we feel in the character of the honoured witnesses referred to, conclude, with Mr M'Dermid, that they were "mistaken" in their notions of dissent till a stronger proof is produced. Some of these men had an established reputation for wisdom and piety. They studied the subject of dissent thoroughly: they endured hardships and made great sacrifices in its support; and their deliberate and recorded judgment was, that it implied a keeping aloof from the ministry and ordinances of the church seceded from. We ourselves have heard the very same sentiments inculcated by ministers of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod—now, indeed, translated to the upper sanctuary, but to whose wisdom and judgment, when going out and in among us, the whole Court was wont to pay deference. The Erskines, and their most faithful followers, held and acted upon the same principles. The late Dr M'Crie—"himself an host"—publicly avowed them, while that excellent body which represents his sentiments, viz., the Original Seceders, have maintained them through good report and bad report. Similar was the doctrine put forth in connection with the most recent and most formidable dissent that ever Scotland witnessed. Dr Candlish, either at the first or second General Assembly of the Free Church, publicly proclaimed this doctrine, and urged upon the members of the Church with which he is connected the duty of keeping aloof—entirely aloof—from the ministry and ordinances of the Established Church; and if these distinguished men, though differing on several other points, are found unanimous and earnest in maintaining the views which Mr M'Dermid repudiates, we may certainly be excused for adhering to their judgment in preference to his; and, what is still more awkward, the views to which he excepts, in the former generations of Dissenters, seem to us to be the doctrine laid down in our Testimony on the subject in question. What else can be made of the following paragraph? "All true believers have spiritual fellowship with one another in Christ. Christians may have communion with one another in what is common to them in their private Christian capacity. *But ecclesiastical fellowship, in the ordinances and privileges of the Church, cannot be maintained in purity and power without submission also to the government and discipline of the Church.*" According to the doctrine here enunciated, moreover, were the Covenanters of Scotland wont to be trained. This, we trust, is the sentiment entertained by not a few of them yet; but if a revolution of sentiment is now proposed, we are the more instant that a good cause be shown for undergoing it.

We can by no means accept of what Mr M'Dermid would pass off as an argument in support of his strictures. All that he advances under this head is found in the definition which he gives of what he calls the true principles of dissent, and consists in a mere assertion. Hear his definition—"In dissenting from a church, we do not dissent from everything in that church, but only certain

things we look upon as wrong and erroneous. It is from what we deem error that we dissent, while we leave behind a church of Christ." This definition seems to us imperfect and fallacious. We do not at present enter on any minute animadversions upon it, our object being merely to show that it is not a sufficient defence of the strictures passed by its author upon the ages that are gone. We repeat that the definition seems to us erroneous. That every enlightened and conscientious person who feels it his duty to separate from a church, dissents from what is wrong in her, is certainly true. But does this embrace the whole truth? Does it comprehend all that is implied in positive dissent? Does it comprehend the formal reason of separation? Such a man, as it seems to us, not only dissents from the *corruptions* of the church, but dissents from, and protests against, the *church itself*. Properly speaking, it is not so much *from* the corruptions of a church, as on *account* of them, that a man dissents when he withdraws from her pale. Dissent from the mere abuses of a church may be maintained to a considerable extent, while, as yet, the dissenter remains in her communion. And under this very plea have multitudes in every age clung to corrupt establishments. Though remaining in their communion, they have dissented from, and testified against, their corruption. On this plea does the evangelical section of the English Church, at the present day, persist in its connection with an unscriptural hierarchy. To every appeal addressed to this party to come out of that Church, that they may not be partakers of its sins, &c., the ready reply is,—Oh! we dissent from, and testify against, all that is "wrong and erroneous" in our Church, but feel it our duty to abide in our position, and ply the superior advantages afforded us by an Established Church. Thus the duration of iniquitous systems is prolonged on earth, and the triumphs of the Redeemer's cause retarded. The interests of divine truth, and the purity of scriptural ordinances, require that the faithful witnesses of Jesus take a step in advance of the definition alluded to—require that not only they dissent from what is "wrong and erroneous" in a church, but separate from, and testify against, the church itself, for retaining and persisting in what is "wrong and erroneous"—require that they withdraw from her *ministry*, because connected with, and implicated in, the abuses complained of—that they withdraw from her *ordinances*, because administered under a system that is defective or positively corrupt. How could a consistent and effective testimony be maintained against the errors and abuses of a church if her ministry is recognized and countenanced, and the ordinances of grace and salvation accepted at her hand? In such a case, the language would indicate one thing; the conduct would indicate a very different thing. The former is heard denouncing her; the latter is seen abetting her. In such a case, you partake of other men's sins. Nor can this mode of reasoning be consistently rejected by Mr M'Dermid, or by any person adhering to the testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, because it is the identical line of argument the Church pursues in relation to its dissent from the civil government of this realm. Mr M'Dermid would not say—cannot say—that he dissents *only* from what is "wrong and erroneous" in the

civil constitution of Britain. He dissents from the *civil government itself*, because embodying in it immoralities and wrongs.* And, instead of "patronising," and holding fellowship with it, he is bound himself, and bound to charge his people, to proclaim no attachment to it; to vow no allegiance to it; to hold no fellowship with it, either by forming a part of the Legislature, or by holding executive offices under the crown, civil or military; to waive the elective franchise; and even to withhold from it, as such, their prayers and benedictions. And if it is becoming to maintain such a position as this, in relation to a *civil government*, against which we have recorded our protest, can it be consistent to maintain a partial or occasional communion with a *church* from which we have substantial reasons of dissent? If the *existence* of corruptions in her made it imperative to separate from her, the *continuation* of these corruptions makes it imperative to keep aloof from her. If, when within her pale, it was felt inconsistent to join in her ordinances, because involving a participation of other men's sins; now, when constrained by conscience to withdraw from her, and to occupy the position of dissent and protest, can it be less consistent? It is not intended but that Christian affection is to be extended to all in that church who love our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not intended but intercourse, yea, and co-operation, may be maintained with her ministers and members in their private Christian capacity. But fellowship in her ordinances, be it practised to a greater or lesser degree, seems to us to stultify the position of dissent assumed, inasmuch as it implies that there are no substantial grounds of difference, while, at the same time, separation is maintained.

I am borne out by a high authority in this line of argumentation. The late Dr M'Crie, in allusion to some such doctrine as we are rebutting, says,—“It is inconsistent and self-contradictory. It strikes against the radical principles of the unity of the Church, and confirms schism by law, while it provides that the parties shall remain separate at the same time that it proceeds on the supposition that there is no scriptural or conscientious ground of difference between them. . . . It prevents all the good effects which might be expected from warrantable and necessary separations, without the compensation of a rational and effective conjunction. Purity of communion is endangered; persons are encouraged to continue in connection with the most corrupt churches; and a faithful testimony against errors and abuses, with all consistent attempts to have them removed or prevented, is held up to odium and reproach, as dictated by bigotry, as tending to revive old dissensions, and to defeat the delightful prospect of those halcyon days of peace which are anticipated under the reign of mutual forbearance and charity.”

A REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

* Without committing ourselves to principles of the Reformed Presbyterians here appealed to, which we are unable to adopt, this is the argument which we would have employed in reasoning with a Reformed Presbyterian on the subject under discussion; nor is it easy to see how it can be satisfactorily met.—Ed. O. S. M.

THE MUTUAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME.

[The following able paper has been received with great pleasure. It must be admitted that there are a number of Original Seceders—a few, perhaps, in almost every congregation—who, under various influences, do not make conscience of contributing of their substance for the support of divine ordinances as becomes those who make such a high profession. We are, however, satisfied that the district in which “X” has been labouring as a collector is not a fair sample of the spirit by which Original Seceders in general are characterized in this matter. It gives us pain, indeed, to think that a district should be found in any of our congregations in which such a large proportion as twelve out of twenty-two, or more than a half, should refuse to contribute to the Mutual Assistance Fund. It is gratifying to know, as a contrast to this, that there are instances of congregations in which such refusals have been exceedingly rare—not more than one or two in a whole congregation,—and in which the collectors have for years had the most cordial reception given them. There seems to have been grievous misapprehension by some as to the division of a surplus among all the ministers. It is only what is over after the aid-receiving ministers have received as large a share of the fund as has ever been given, and as it is deemed wise, according to the present plan, to give in any case, that there is anything divided among the ministers generally. The surplus not only gives all a special interest in the prosperity of the fund, and is a small beginning in the direction of augmenting the stipends of all the ministers—an object for which other churches are making the most strenuous efforts. It furnishes also a guarantee that the supplies of the aid-receiving ministers from this fund shall not fall beneath the *maximum* proportions that have been received by them according to the rules of distribution hitherto acted on, while their share of the surplus, of which all share alike, is added to this. And it seems strange that any individuals in our body should be dissatisfied that the incomes of our ministers in general should be a little increased, seeing that the largest stipend paid to any of our ministers falls considerably beneath what other Presbyterian Churches regard as the least that any minister of the gospel should receive.—Ed. O. S. M.]

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ORIGINAL SECESSION MAGAZINE.

It has occurred to me that a brief statement of a month's experience of a collector for the Mutual Assistance Fund might furnish matter for profitable reflection to your readers—all the more, perhaps, that it comes from a *lay* member of the Church.

I got the names of twenty-two members of the congregation with which I am connected, from whom subscriptions for the Mutual Assistance Fund were expected. Of these, twelve did not contribute, and ten contributed an average, *for the year*, of 6s. 9d. I was disappointed at the result, and called upon six friends, belonging to another denomination, for small donations, which might help to make up a more respectable aggregate. *All* the six contributed cheerfully; and their average subscription was 8s.

I may just explain that I was somewhat diffident about making an appeal on behalf of our scheme to members of another church; not because I had any fear that a response would not be given, nor because I apprehended that it would be given grudgingly, but rather

because I felt convinced that, though we have not much wealth among us, there is quite enough to afford an adequate maintenance for the ministry, if there was the willing mind. If, then, I am held to have brought down the prestige of our own Church, by going beyond its bounds for contributions to a purely denominational scheme, I have no scruple in rolling over the blame upon those who might have prevented that step by their own liberality.

Having made this preliminary apology, or rather explanation, allow me now to point out three lessons which I think the facts I have stated, in connection with others which might be mentioned, are fitted to teach.

I. It is plain to me that, though some contribute according to, and almost beyond, their means, our people generally do not contribute to the support of the gospel as God has prospered them. From what I have stated above, it will be seen that parties not connected with our Church appear to be more ready to give, and more liberal in giving, than are our own people. That I am fully warranted in holding the donations above referred to as equivalent to yearly subscriptions will be apparent, when I state that three of the six to whom I made application desired me to call back when I wanted more; and though I explained to all of them that it was only a small donation once for all I expected, one of them was so resolute in putting down his subscription as to be given quarterly, that, with shamefacedness, I was constrained to yield, and accept from him a subscription larger by 2s. a quarter than any I got from our own people. And though the other three did not, in so many words, desire me to call upon them again on the same errand, their contributions were given with a heartiness and readiness which convinces me that, if I thought it my duty to make similar demands a year hence, the result would be the same. I have just to add here, that the friends to whom I applied were not in opulent circumstances, but men of moderate income.

II. The second inference which I venture to draw from the case is, that the members of the Original Secession Church need to be trained and disciplined in the practice of giving for religious purposes. I firmly believe that, within a certain and a not very circumscribed limit, the more Christian people are called upon to give, the more readily and the more liberally will they give for every proper object. I think the Free Church, in the providence of God, has been raised up for this, among other reasons, that she might give an example of liberality to all Christian churches; and I have little doubt that one great reason of the material prosperity of that Church, and the liberality of a great many of her adherents, is, that they have devised liberal things; and that, being better taught the duty, and better trained in the habit of giving, they are prepared to look with a more friendly eye upon all subscription-sheets for benevolent objects, regarding the act of contribution as a privilege, rather than a mode of escaping the imputation of shabbiness. If our machinery for the purpose of collections were as complete as that of the Free Church—if the same care were bestowed in seeing that every one had an *opportunity* of contributing *something* to the schemes which our Church sets on foot

—and if something of the same plain speaking were practised in regard to the support of the gospel, I would hope, by the blessing of God, for larger results.

III. We need—greatly need—the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, in his quickening influences, to warm our cold hearts—to make us conscious of what is our high vocation as members of the Church of Christ—to fill our hearts with the faith which works by love, and constrains to liberality in Christ's cause to laying up treasure in heaven and not on the earth, and to all good works. This is the motive-power, without which our best machinery will be inoperative. This fills the reservoir which will cause the streams of liberality to flow till they reach its own level, and render unnecessary the precarious, hand-to-mouth, unsatisfactory expedient of pumping up, with incessant toil, that which should flow freely, as by the force of gravitation. The Holy Spirit is expressly and specially promised for the asking; and if, in our closets, our families, our prayer-meetings, and our congregations, we prove the Lord by prayer without ceasing, he will pour out a blessing till there shall not be room enough to receive.

I should like, as a postscript, to be allowed a reference to a feeling of dissatisfaction among some about the mode in which the Mutual Assistance Fund is distributed. The idea—quite conscientiously, I am well persuaded—obtains among some, that, as the fund is intended for the benefit of the ministers of congregations which are not self-sustaining, no part of the proceeds should come back to the ministers of congregations which are held to be self-sustaining. I confess I do not see the force of the objection, knowing full well that there is not one minister in the Original Secession Church who gets anything like the stipend which he has a right to expect, and which, if all were contributing as they ought, might be forthcoming; and believing, moreover, that it is better that there should be some ministers tolerably comfortable than that all should be reduced to one low, dead level. But allowing that there is reason in the objection, I cannot understand how any that are concerned for the better support of the poorer ministers should, on that account, withhold their subscriptions altogether, as some do. I do not see how the poorer ministers will be better off with no supplement at all than with a small supplement; and that, of course, would be the issue, if the objection made gets practical application in the way referred to. And, I am sure, no one who appreciates the Presbyterian principles, of which we claim, *par excellence*, to be the defenders and exhibitors, will think of concurring the Synod into the adoption of their views by withholding their contributions till the Synod allocates the funds differently. Let the money-power be tried in another way. Let there be contributions sent in till the treasury overflows, and there will be no difficulty about the distribution. Ministers of congregations, both large and small, will then have enough and to spare.

Though at the risk of making the postscript as long as the letter, allow me to add another consideration, which, if rightly apprehended, must stimulate to increased exertions in raising the funds of the Mutual Assistance Scheme to a point greatly beyond what they have

yet reached. God has done great things for us in raising up ministers for vacant congregations. How are we to show our gratitude for that, and our desire to transmit to posterity the covenanted cause, for which we profess concern? Is it by discouraging aspirants to the ministry—by holding out to them a doom of poverty, which they will escape if they devote their talents and acquirements to any other learned profession? Surely not. Surely we do not live under a less merciful dispensation than that under which it was said, once and again,—“Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth,” one Levite being then supported by every twenty-seven or so of the people of Israel. It is to be hoped that the fund for aiding students will prosper. But that is not enough. After they have, probably through many discouragements and difficulties, attained the position of ministers, they ought not to be subjected to anxieties and cares about the temporal support of themselves and families, so as to unfit them for the proper discharge of their sacred functions.* If we were so poor as to be unable to provide an adequate maintenance for our ministry—which we are not—then we might expect that deliverance and enlargement would arise from another place, and that God would uphold his own cause; but if we do not that which is in the power of our own hands to do, I know not how we can expect that God will continue to us a blessing which we show by our conduct that we value so lightly.

X.

EXTRACTS.

THE INAUGURAL BALL OF PRESIDENT BUCHANAN EXPOSED.

We give from the *Westminster Herald* the following faithful and able exposure of a purpose which had been formed and announced early in February, and which will likely have been carried into execution ere this comes into the hand of our readers—of having the entrance of Mr Buchanan on his official duties, as the President of the United States, inaugurated by a great National Ball, which, it is said, will be a credit to the capital of that mighty nation:—

“DANCING PRESIDENT.—We hear of executive patronage, executive clemency, and various functions performed by executive officers, but executive *dancing* is a new phrase. Read, however, the following:—

“‘The President has accepted an invitation to be present at the National Inaugural Ball, saying that he has no doubt but that it will be a credit to Washington.’

“This is a movement worthy of some strictures. The President elect, Hon. James Buchanan, gives a ball at his inauguration. A house is to be erected for the express purpose; and President Pierce receives an invitation, accepts it graciously,

* I know that there are some who think that our ministers are well enough paid, though some of them do not get much more than half what the Free Church has pronounced the *minimum* stipend, consistent with a decent maintenance. But it would be out of place here to explode that grievous fallacy—a fallacy so apparent, that I have never yet found any one who could venture to bring it to the test of arithmetical calculation. Do our people know that, in addition to the peculiar burdens upon the income of ministers, *our* ministers generally pay their own travelling expenses to assist at sacraments and meetings of Presbytery and Synod, often to great distances, out of their own pockets?

and expresses his satisfaction, and more, his gratification with the movement—says, 'He has no doubt but that it will be an honour to Washington.'

"Among the nations of the world, the United States of America have an honourable stand. Having by a revolutionary effort thrown themselves into a political organization separate from the United Kingdom of Great Britain, about seventy years ago, these States have risen in wealth, intelligence, and political importance, and are now regarded, and justly, as second to no government on earth in respect to the leading objects for which 'governments are instituted among men.' The executive officer of our government rules more intelligent freemen than any other man or woman in the world; and, in virtue of all these things, enjoys a proud pre-eminence. As the position of our presiding officer is high and honourable, so are his responsibilities increased. Whatever superficial and unimportant views may be taken of this subject by the unthinking multitude, we must not lose sight of the fact that he is a *minister of God*, invested with important responsibilities, both for the glory of God and the good of the people. We are aware that this designation of officers under our government does not suit the popular lip; but it will be found that those who do not wish to regard civil officers as God's ministers, have very little knowledge of their Bibles, or very little concern for what is written therein. We are no more at liberty to set aside *national* responsibility to God, or the phraseology by which it is expressed, than *individual* responsibility. It is a matter independent of our sanction. If a man stands in the place of God's minister, he sustains the responsibility whether he acknowledges the fact or not.

"The sober truth of the case, then, is—one of God's ministers, whose term of office expires, is retiring, and his successor, in coming into office, signalizes the fact by a ball! The retiring officer believes it will be an honour to the capital of this great Republic. These are the facts, and on them we have a few firm remarks.

"1. We take issue with the President. We believe and are sure that balls, and promiscuous dancing in general, are injurious to public morals everywhere; that they ensnare the youth, turn them away from God and from duty; that they are the incipient steps to a life of dissipation and profligacy. They are inseparably connected with *sins*, which, instead of being 'a credit,' according to the testimony of the retiring executive officer, 'is a reproach to any people.' This is not all; men in high places have an overwhelming influence. Let it be known throughout the land that the highest officer in the nation concurs in any practice, and that practice is set free from reproach—is dignified, and esteemed honourable by themselves,—no matter how destructive to private virtue and public morals. These high and honourable men should understand a little better what they are doing. There is not a Christian society—a church of any denomination worth the name of a Christian Church—but would censure her members for attending balls, even should they be prepared and commended by the President of these United States. The amount of the whole, then, is—that the first step of President Buchanan in entering office, and the last act of President Pierce in retiring from office, is to hold up to public contempt the discipline of the Christian Church, and to sweep away, by the whole force of their character, strengthened by their exalted position, the embankments which piety, and faith, and prayer have been labouring continually to build up round the youth of our land.

"Governor Pollock, of this State, received an invitation to a ball at the time of his inauguration, which he declined; and, if he did not, he ought to have said that it was contrary to the discipline of the Church to which he belonged. It is worth while to elect such a Governor, if it were only for such a testimony, from such a source, against this vulgar vice.

"2. It is decidedly ridiculous. No man can act out of character without subjecting himself to the pity or scorn of those who observe him. It was one thing which brought Nero into contempt with the people, that he often appeared on the stage as an actor. Even in heathen Rome buffoonery and imperial royalty seemed utterly inconsistent. We have a right to expect the President of the United States to be a high-minded, dignified man; but when he advertises himself as capable of figuring in the ball-room, he sinks—by a necessity as certain as the facts—he sinks in the estimation of all sober men. Then take into account his age, and what ought to be his experience and sense of honour, it is ridiculous. The Hon. James Buchanan, President of the United States, at the age of seventy, taking his position on the floor, and, with shrunken muscle, furrowed face, and hoary locks, and trudging, like a poor, senseless Southern negro, to the sound of his banjo. Yet President Pierce

will take part, and thinks it will be 'a credit' to the capital of this great, virtuous, and high-minded nation.

"3. It constitutes a call for Christian people to reflect. We had occasion to remark some time ago that the election was over, but some of the effects of it would not pass so soon. In thousands of instances, men of undoubted Christian character manifested an intemperate zeal in striving for the election of their favourite candidate; and the man who would claim their attention, wishing them to do nothing, in the heat of party strife, against their religious profession, or the obligations under which they were placed to the King of kings, was thrust aside indignantly, as interfering with things not belonging to him. It is now a proper season to reflect whether the God whom you serve or the god of this world was most honoured by the promotion of the man of your choice. We do not say this thing tauntingly. As the servants of God, we ask you, is it worth while for us to be concerned so much for the promotion of a man who, in his first act, sets himself to promote folly, and to sanction the 'pleasure of sin'?"

"Are unprincipled dancers to raise caution among Christian brethren? Will Christian men, for sake of promoting such, become alienated from each other? This certainly looks like 'hatching the cockatrice's eggs.' How much more appropriate would be a day of *fasting* and special prayer as an inauguration or ordination ceremony, that God's blessing might rest on him and on the people he proposes to govern. Solomon's example is worthy of imitation: 1 Kings, iii. 5-15. Read it. It is useless to say, in connection with this, that James Buchanan does not profess religion. His friends, with his consent, have put him in the place of God's minister, and such are his responsibilities, whether he recognizes them or not. We do not believe that the Ruler of this universe shifts his position to suit Cæsar, or Nicholas, or Buchanan. For all those placed under Him over the people, there is 'one law and one manner.' *We must have a just man, ruling in the fear of God.*"

A MERCHANT'S SYSTEM OF GIVING.

A merchant, in answer to inquiries, refers back to a period, when he says,—
 "In consecrating my life anew to God, aware of the ensnaring influence of riches, and the necessity of deciding on a plan of charity before wealth should bias my judgment, I adopted the following system:—I decided to balance my accounts as nearly as I could every month, and, reserving such portion of profits as might appear adequate to cover probable losses, to lay aside, by entry on a benevolent account, one-tenth of the remaining profits, great or small, as a fund for benevolent expenditure, supporting myself and family on the remaining nine-tenths. I further determined that if at any time my net profits—that is, profits from which clerk hire and store expenses had been deducted—should exceed five hundred dollars in a month, I would give twelve and a half per cent.; if over seven hundred dollars, fifteen per cent.; if over nine hundred dollars, seventeen and a half per cent.; if over thirteen hundred dollars, twenty-two and a half per cent.,—thus increasing the proportion of the whole, as God should prosper, until, at fifteen hundred dollars, I should give twenty-five per cent., or three hundred and seventy-five dollars a month. As capital was of the utmost importance to my success in business, I decided not to increase the foregoing scale until I had acquired a certain capital, after which I would give one quarter of all net profits, great or small; and on the acquisition of another certain amount of capital, I decided to give half; and on acquiring what I determined would be a full sufficiency of capital, then to give the whole of my net profits.

"It is now several years since I adopted this plan, and under it I have acquired a handsome capital, and have been prospered beyond my most sanguine expectations. Although constantly giving, I have never yet touched the bottom of my fund, and have repeatedly been surprised to find what large draughts it would bear. True, during some months I have encountered a salutary trial of faith, when this rule has led me to lay by the tenth, while the remainder proved inadequate to my support; but the tide has soon turned; and, with gratitude, I have recognized a heavenly hand more than making good all past deficiencies.

"This system has been of great advantage to me, enabling me to feel that my life is directly employed for God. It has afforded me happiness in enabling me to portion out the Lord's money, and has enlisted my mind more in the progress of Christ's cause. Happy privilege, which the humblest may enjoy, of thus associating

the common labours of life with the grateful service of the Saviour, and of making that which naturally leads the heart from God subserve the highest spiritual good.

"This system has saved me from commercial dangers, by leading me to simplify business and avoid extensive credits. It has made me a better merchant; for the monthly pecuniary observations which I have been wont to take, though often laborious, have brought me to a better knowledge of the state of my affairs, and led me to be more cautious and prudent than I should otherwise have been. I believe this system tends to enlarge the Christian's views, increase his disinterestedness, and leads him to shun the tricks of trade. My own observation also confirms the belief, that even warm-hearted Christians *must determine beforehand* on the system they will adapt, if they would secure the benefits of the gospel plan to themselves, under the grace and providence of God, or its happy results to the cause of Christ."—*American Paper.*

THE WISDOM AND GOODNESS OF GOD AS SEEN IN AIR.

THE God of creation and of grace is one. He who redeemed His people by His blood is also He by whom the worlds were made, and by the word of whose power all things are upheld. Though it is in the work of redemption that the glory of God shines with the greatest brightness, it is not the only glass in which the divine glory is presented to our contemplation, nor the only one to which our attention is called in the volume of inspiration. "The heavens," the Scriptures assure us, "declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork." It is admitted that there are "wonders in the deep," which those "who go down to the sea in ships, and do business in the great waters," behold. And when men, as the Psalmist did, consider the heavens—the remote heavens, in their majesty and grandeur, the work of God's fingers—the moon and the stars which He hath ordained,—when they see the latter in the light of science, in their countless numbers, their vast magnitude, amazing distances, and the laws by which they are governed, they behold in them a marvellous display of the glory of God.

But there is a nearer heaven—the atmosphere,—in which there are wonders of divine wisdom and goodness which are more worthy of admiration than many think, and by which all are laid under a deeper debt of obligation to God than any duly feel. It is not possible to conceive how much men owe to this all but invisible instrument of divine goodness. The atmosphere is unquestionably a great work of God. The space assigned it in the inspired history of creation, as the great work of the second day, makes this manifest. It is not, perhaps, generally very distinctly known, that the atmosphere is the firmament which God called into existence by the word of His power on the second day of the creative week. "God said," we are told, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." This is the atmosphere that is placed, by the hand of the great Creator, in the midst of the waters—dividing the waters that exist in the seas, lakes, and rivers, on the earth, from the waters that are lodged in the clouds, as so many reservoirs, sustained by and enclosed in the air, as their embankment, till they are from time to

time poured down thence in gentle showers to water the earth, and distilled in dew on the tender herbs for their refreshment.

Like all the works of God, the atmosphere proclaims at once the wisdom and goodness of its great Former.

I. It does so *in its perfect adaptation to the various ends which it was designed to fulfil*. This admits of a very extended illustration, which we cannot overtake, and does not accord with our object, which is merely to indicate some of the more simple and prominent ways in which the glory of God shines in this part of his works.

One leading end for which the atmosphere was made, as appears from the distinct specification of it in the Bible record of creation, is, *to divide the waters from the waters*; to keep the waters connected with our globe perpetually separated, for important purposes, into two grand divisions—the waters above and the waters beneath the firmament. And this end it has fulfilled and is fulfilling most effectually. By means of the atmosphere, all the superfluous moisture on this earth's surface is ever ascending, in the form of vapour, by countless channels, cleansed from every noxious ingredient, to the receptacles in the skies, which are thus kept replenished with thoroughly purified water, to be sent down in the fit season in rain and dew, without any effort on the part of man, to water every field, refresh every tree and shrub, every herb and flower, and furnish the whole vegetable kingdom with nourishment which is essential to its prosperity—to its very existence, in the best possible way. It does this, from year to year, in such a way as the combined skill and laborious efforts of all the earth's inhabitants could not have done were ever so much water furnished for this purpose beneath, and none above, the firmament. Thus, too, the health and comfort of men, and of the whole animal creation, as well as the good of the vegetable kingdom, are signally promoted. By this means, the water necessary for so many purposes on this earth is kept in a healthful state by perpetual motion; and, while it acts as one great purifier over the whole face of the globe, is ever undergoing a process of purification itself, and, in its great masses, preserved pure. Through this provision of divine wisdom, the earth has also all its demands for moisture fully met from month to month, and season to season, by a much less quantity of water than had been required to supply its wants had this to be wholly drawn from sources beneath the firmament or on its own surface. In Egypt we have an illustration of this, in which there is little rain, where the lack of an adequate supply of moisture from the waters above the firmament has to be compensated by such a large supply of the waters beneath, that the whole country is for a considerable time thereby inundated.

Another great end which air is designed to accomplish, is, *to be itself a leading means of life and health to man and beast, as well as to every herb and plant that grows upon the ground*. For the accomplishment of this great end, it is marvellously adapted in manifold ways, as will appear in the future illustration of the general subject.

It is so specially, we may notice here, *by the ingredients of which it is composed*. It consists of three gases, in very different proportions, along with a small quantity of aqueous vapour, each of which is essen-

tial, in its own place, for accomplishing the desired ends. The two leading constituent parts of air are nitrogen and oxygen, in the form of gas—about four parts of the former to a fifth of the latter—with a very small portion of carbonic acid. Though these gases differ in their specific gravity, they are so mixed together by the law given them by their great Former—whether mechanically or chemically is matter of controversy—that they are present together in all places in which air exists in a healthful state, and each is essential, in its place, to sustain the life and promote the welfare of man and beast, and also for sustaining and nourishing the various herbs and plants with which the earth is replenished. It is remarkable that any one of these gases apart would speedily destroy, or be incapable of sustaining life—that air in which they do not exist in the due proportions, through some vitiating cause, is exceedingly unhealthful—and that that air is the most healthful in which they exist in the proportions in which they are found in the atmosphere in its natural state. It is a very striking provision, also, that that ingredient in the atmosphere, viz., carbonic acid, which is very noxious to animal life when it exists to any excess in the air which we breathe, is peculiarly nourishing to plants, and largely absorbed by them; while oxygen, which is so essential to human and animal life, and is ever extensively consumed in sustaining it, is given forth by plants,—so that, by the reciprocal action of the animal and vegetable kingdoms of nature, the atmosphere, in all ordinary cases, is kept in a healthful state. This is beautifully expressed by a writer in the *North British Review*—a work which, we are sorry to say, on moral and religious subjects, is anything but a safe guide. “The carbonic acid with which to-day our breathing fills the air, to-morrow seeks its way round the world. The date-trees that grow round the falls of the Nile will drink it in by their leaves; the cedars of Lebanon will take of it to add to their stature; the cocoa-nuts of Tahiti will grow rapidly on it; and the palms and bananas of Japan will change it into flowers. The oxygen we are breathing was distilled for us a short time ago by the Mangolias of Susquehanna, and the great trees that skirt the Orinoco and the Amazon; the giant rhododendrons of the Himalayas, and the roses and myrtles of Cashmere, and the forests older than the flood buried deep in the heart of Africa, far behind the Mountains of the Moon.” The carbonic acid which we expire, and to inhale which again would be death to us, is carried away from us and brought to the mouth of the plants, to which it is life, on the swift wings of the wind, as the ready servant of God’s providing; whilst the oxygen, which is life to us, and, in excess, would be death to the plants, is carried away from them, and brought from far to our lips by the same agency. And this process is going on every moment for our benefit, without any effort, or even care, on our part.

The air which we breathe, and of which many think so little as a manifestation of divine goodness and wisdom, is more essential to life and comfort than almost all other sources of this put together. We can live for a considerable time without meat or drink, but we cannot live a few minutes without air. On this we are as dependent as the

fishes are on water. It is a chief part of the food of all living creatures. "The atmosphere," says Maun, quoted by the *Westminster Herald*, "which forms the outer surface of the habitable world, is a vast reservoir into which the supply of food designed for living creatures is thrown; or, in one word, it is itself the food, in its simplest form, of all living creatures. The animal grinds down the fibre and the tissue of the plant for the nutritious store that has been laid up within its cells, and converts this into the substance of which its own organs are composed. The plant acquires the organs and nutritious store thus yielded up as food to the animal from the invulnerable air surrounding it; but the animals are furnished with the means of locomotion and of seizure,—they can approach their food, and lay hold of and swallow it: plants must wait till their food comes to them. No solid particles find access to their frames; the restless, ambient air, which rushes past them, loaded with the carbon, the hydrogen, the oxygen, the water, and everything they need in the shape of supplies, is constantly at hand to minister to their wants, not only to afford them food in due season, but in the shape or fashion in which it alone can avail them."

Many ignorantly think that the nourishment of herbs, and plants, and trees, is chiefly, and almost entirely, drawn from the soil of the earth. This, no doubt, does its part; but it had been utterly unavailing without the influences of the atmosphere. It is by this especially that the health and growth of plants and trees are promoted. It is especially by the atmosphere that the wide spreading banyans of India, the lofty cedars of Lebanon, and the massive oaks of our own country, are furnished with those supplies of nourishment by which they are sustained in their beauty and strength.

We cannot illustrate at any length various other important purposes which air fulfils, and to which it is so perfectly adapted. It is the great essential medium of sound. Without it, the powers of speech and of hearing had been bestowed on man in vain. It is scarcely possible for us to conceive the degree in which human happiness must have been abridged were this property of air wanting, or the melancholy condition to which society must have been reduced. It is the means, too, by which the equilibrium of heat and cold is to so great a degree promoted and sustained over very extensive districts of our globe. It was not designed that this should be uniform: different degrees of heat and cold at different times, and in different places, are beneficial, and this is not prevented by the atmosphere. But were it not for its agency, much more extensive regions than now are would have been uninhabited, and doomed to utter sterility. This is prevented by the constant ascent of heated air from the regions lying within the tropics, and the rushing in of cold air in powerful currents from the north and south, and from the oceans, to the burning continents scorched by the rays of a vertical sun. But this is not the only use of these currents in the atmosphere. They are also of immense service to men in their commercial pursuits—wafting with speed the fleets of nations over many thousand miles of ocean, carrying their varied merchandise from port to port and kingdom to kingdom, and from the one end of the earth to the other.

In the atmosphere, too, the fowls of heaven, in their countless numbers and variety, are furnished with a high source of the happiness for the enjoyment of which their Creator has given them capacity. Through this they perform their journeys in search of food with ease and speed. Here they express the joy of its kind which they feel by the play in which they engage amid their ocean of air, as the leviathan and other inhabitants of the sea do in the waters of the great deep ; and here they celebrate the praises of their Creator as they can, in the songs in which they give utterance to the happiness which they feel in the enjoyment of the fruits of His beneficence.

It is to the atmosphere, also, that we are indebted for much of the beauty with which the face of creation is adorned, on which the eye rests, and through it the mind, with so much delight and satisfaction. Though from its tenuity the air is colourless to our vision when near, it is the atmosphere, seen in the distance, that presents the beautiful azure which it gives us such pleasure to behold over the face of the sky. Hence, too, the bluish hue in which distant mountains present themselves to our view. It is to it, also, as the resting-place of the clouds at different heights, according to their density, and its power of refracting the rays of the sun, that we owe, under God, the panoramic beauties with which the heavens are frequently adorned, especially at the rising and setting of the sun. And were it not for the height of the atmosphere above this earth, and its power of refracting the rays of the sun, we would have no twilight. We would have had to endure the pain of a sudden transition from the bright light of day to the darkness of night every evening, and the reverse of this to undergo every morning. But by the atmosphere—on which the sun's rays continue to shine after he has descended beneath the line by which our direct vision of them is bounded—they are bent or reflected towards the earth, so that we enjoy their light for a considerable time after sunset, and his light is gradually withdrawn ; and what corresponds to this is enjoyed every morning. The dawn of day, which those who wait for the morning hail with joy, is just the rays of the approaching sun that have reached the utmost verge of the atmosphere, reflected by this towards the earth. And the illumined portion of the sky ever widens, as the sun approaches nearer, and pierces a larger portion of the atmosphere with his rays, till at length the glorious luminary bursts into view, filling the whole sphere of our vision, in heaven above and earth beneath, with the effulgence of his light.

II. *The amazing abundance with which air is furnished is another illustration of these perfections, and of divine goodness in particular.* Air, which is so essential, not only to the comfort, but to the very life of man and countless other creatures, is furnished in such abundance and with such constancy as impressively proclaim the matchless munificence of the God of creation and providence, who is also the God of grace. It not only encompasses the whole globe, so as to be perpetually near to meet the demands made on it in all places, in every country and every clime—it does so to a depth of some forty-five or fifty miles ; for such is the supposed distance from the surface of the

earth to the utmost border of the atmosphere. We thus live and move in an ocean of air, the height of which over our heads far surpasses the measurement of the lowest depths of the mighty oceans of water that occupy so much space on this earth's surface. Water, which is so essential to the welfare and life of the varied tribes of creatures that people the seas, however liberal the supplies of this are, is not furnished in such plenty for them to swim and play in as air is to the inhabitants of the dry land.

This abundance is also furnished without any interruption. The copious measure in which the sun, at the Creator's command, pours down his light around, and into, the abodes of man and beast during the day, is succeeded by a night of darkness. The supplies of water are frequently withdrawn from some places, and the consequences of this withdrawalment are of the most disastrous kind. But as the air is pre-eminently necessary at all times and in all places, it is never withdrawn. It surrounds men, and fills their abodes by night as well as by day. Neither the intense cold of the frigid zone can seal it up, nor the burning heat of the torrid zone dry it up.

III. *Air, in all this abundance, is furnished most freely.* No power—no combination on this earth—has ever been able to make a monopoly of, or put a price on, this fruit of divine wisdom and goodness. Like the light of the sun, it is furnished in equal abundance to the poor as to the rich, to the beggar in rags as to the king arrayed in purple. The table of the poor may be scantily supplied with some of the other means of sustaining life; but he is furnished with this means of life, health, and comfort, in the same abundance and in the same purity as the possessors of the greatest wealth. This follows the captive to his dungeon, and fills every corner of the prisoner's cell, and contrives, by some crevice, however small, to find ingress in fresh supplies, and egress when vitiated, so that this means of life and health shall be enjoyed by him in plenty and purity when other comforts are withheld. No doubt there are exceptions to this, but through other causes; not through any fault in the air, which does its utmost to reach him over every obstacle.

Not only is air furnished abundantly without any price in money: it is so without any *cost of effort*. Even in innocence, man had to labour in dressing the garden, of the fruit of which he was to eat; and now men have to make the most strenuous exertions in cultivating the soil, and in gathering in as well as in preparing its produce, in order that their table may be furnished with supplies of food. "All the labour of man" is thus "for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled." Water, too, however abundantly furnished, has in not a few cases to be obtained by considerable effort. It must frequently be carried from a distance, or brought into the abodes of men at great expense. In warm countries, deep wells have to be dug to procure supplies of this, and great exertions must be made to secure it in abundance in all seasons. But no such efforts are required that men may be furnished with air, so essential to their happiness. When men remove from one place to another, they have to carry supplies of many other things with them. But this is sure to meet

them in abundance whithersoever they go. They do not need to fetch supplies of this to any spot of the earth in which they take up their temporary abode. One of the most difficult tasks which men attempt is that of endeavouring to exclude air from any place. Much art, expense, and effort are necessary to exclude it from the smallest space. It fills every room of every abode, and meets and encompasses the inmates of every apartment. It not only follows men into the bowels of the earth; it accompanies, or is before them, in the deep pits which they dig, and into which they descend in search of the treasures which the great Benefactor of men has laid up there; and were it not for the vitiating matter with which it is liable to be mixed in these chambers of darkness, men would be as liberally supplied with air in these as on the mountain-tops.

But we must leave some other illustrations of this interesting subject till afterward, when, if the Lord will, it shall be prosecuted.

Few, we think, can read the preceding pages without feeling, more or less, how much one remarkable fruit of divine wisdom and goodness, which they have been enjoying constantly so long, has been overlooked by them, and what a deep debt of obligation to gratitude God has thereby laid them under, which they have not duly felt or acknowledged. How can this failure be accounted for? Why are other things noticed which are less abundantly furnished, and so as to demand greater effort on our part? Is it because this divine bounty is in a great measure invisible, and because it is so freely furnished that no exertion is necessary to the enjoyment of it except what is instinctive? or because our enjoyment of it is so constant, that it seems almost identified with life itself? None of these things, nor all of them together, can be, or will be, sustained as an excuse for our ingratitude and inattention to this wonderful part of the works of God, in which His glory so shines as to render us without excuse if we do not see it.

This subject suggests other inquiries as to an analagous but far higher and more glorious subject. Is there not another object ever surrounding us infinitely more glorious than air, on whom we are far more dependant, and to whom we are inconceivably indebted, who has been, and is sadly overlooked by most men, and little acknowledged? God himself—the infinite God—in all his glorious perfections, ever surrounds us in all places, filling all the abodes of men. To Him they owe not only their being, but also their preservation, in the possession and exercise of all their faculties every moment. “In Him we live and move and have our being.” “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.” “The darkness hideth not from Him, but the night shineth as the day.” His ear, too, is in every place, marking every word spoken. As His eye is upon the righteous, so His ear is open to their cry. He is near to all men, graciously near to all that call upon Him in truth. His almighty hand and arm are in every place, upholding and protecting whomsoever He will—leaving to perish and keeping alive as He sees meet.

The Son of God, as Mediator, is not only ever with His people, in accordance with His testimony—“Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” He is in them. “I,” says He, “in them, and

thou in me." "I am crucified with Christ," says Paul, "nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ *liveth in me*." The Holy Spirit fills all places with his presence. "Whither," asks David, "shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Yea, He dwells in all true believers—"He dwelleth with you," says Jesus, "and shall be in you."

But how much is this glorious object, who is ever so near us, overlooked and neglected! How much is our constant dependence on Him forgotten! How little is our responsibility to Him felt and his inspection realized! How far are we from duly availing ourselves of our privilege in having the nearest and most constant access to Him in all places and at all times! How backward often to cultivate fellowship with Him! How lamentably deficient are we in cherishing reverence for Him in whose presence we are, or in feeling and expressing gratitude to Him for all that He has done and is doing for us in His providence and grace! How much are our eyes shut on the bright manifestations of His glory, with which we are encompassed in His works, and which are exhibited to us with such clearness in the glass of His word, and in the face of Jesus Christ, as revealed in the gospel! What need is there of increased power so to realize the presence of God as to be fitted for walking with Him, as Enoch did, and setting God always before us, as it was the privilege of the sweet Psalmist of Israel to do, in a measure far above what is the attainment of the greater part—of nearly all professing Christians in these days, when the omnipresent Creator and Saviour is so much supplanted by the creature!

AFRICAN SLAVERY AND AFRICAN EVANGELIZATION.

It were quite out of place to discuss in these pages the moral questions connected with slavery. But it may be interesting and profitable to glance at the workings of this foul system in our day—at the prospects which seem to be opening up to the poor African, and at the duties which Providence may thus seem to be imposing on Britain and on the Christian world. We may best and most briefly consider the leading facts of the case under these three particulars:—First, The domestic policy and position of the slaveholding interest in America. Second, The relations of slavery to the civilized world. Third, The discoveries of Dr Livingston in Central Africa.

Firstly, then, as to the domestic policy and circumstances of the slaveholder in America. It has been wisely ordained that tyranny, and that of the most despotic sort, is necessary to the very existence of slavery. In the southern States of the American Union, we find some 350,000 whites, who are absolute masters of some 4,000,000 blacks. This mastery can only be maintained by combined cunning and energy. No slaveholder thinks of dealing with his slave in the way of argu-

ment; he reigns only by force or fraud, or by a combination of both. The slaveholders regard their relation towards the other States of the Union in the light of their slaveholding tactics. They must rule and govern, or they have lost the only sort of power that they practically understand. Inferior in fiscal and numerical strength to the north, the slaveholding power maintains its footing by insinuating itself into control of the executive authority. The government offices of the Union have been placed under the shadow of slavery; the federal officials are open or unavowed abettors of slaveholding supremacy; and a characteristically dexterous feature of their appointments has been the selection, for southern purposes, of northern men with slaveholding principles or interests. The southerner has shown that he can cajole, on fitting occasions, the man of the north; and on other occasions he can use him as Brooks used Sumner. The southerner is equally at home in arrogance, in flattery, and in brute force; and in all these qualifications he is being constantly educated by his relation to his slaves. Though quite unaccustomed to any industrial pursuit, he has all his life long, from the necessities of his position, practised diplomacy and the science of ruling; and identity of interests and emergencies at home gives to the policy of his party a uniformity, consistency, and solidity, which tells with peculiarly powerful effect when opposed to the divided counsels and conflicting opinions of the north. The self-reliance and self-supremacy of the slaveholders—their combined wiliness and insolence—are allowed to overbear the quieter and less diplomatic men of the north. In short, the slaveholder has, to a great extent, won his position and kept it by much the same strategy as Europe's great military scourge, Napoleon, by bringing the whole weight of his party to bear promptly and energetically, in every crisis, on divided antagonists less prompt and less energetic, though unitedly superior in numbers and resources. But the power of the slaveholders is also as precariously founded as was that of the French dictator; and when we look at the task they must perform before they can really secure success, their position is seen to be hopeless, even in a merely political point of view. That task is nothing less than rolling back the tide of Anglo-Saxon progress which has hitherto flown without interruption, and which has, theoretically at least, uniformly identified itself with civil and religious liberty. Not only so; the task which the southern States set before themselves includes the compelling of the Anglo-Saxon population of the American Union to lend their whole political and fiscal influence to the extension of slavery into territories, the inhabitants of which hate and repudiate it. For nearly half a century, up to the year 1854, there had been no open attempt at aggression on the part of the south. In 1820, by the mission compromise, a line was drawn across the States, which was held to fix in perpetuity the respective domains of free labour and slavery. This line left the south at the time with a decided preponderance in the legislature; but the rapid increase of the north, in wealth, population, and political power, alarmed the stationary south, which immediately set about using its artificially superior political influence for the purpose of making the federal

system a still more effective rampart of the "domestic institution." The struggle resulting on the attempt has for some time arrested the attention of the civilized world. It is a struggle between free labour and slave labour. Kansas, where its tragedies have been chiefly enacted, is a territory almost nine hundred miles long, and about two hundred wide. It owes its importance, not to its size nor to its marvellous fertility, but to its position between the existing States and the immense unabsorbed districts that stretch westward to the Pacific Ocean. With slavery established in Kansas, the slaveholders would occupy an important vantage-ground for taking possession of the whole of these immense regions. Into these regions the surplus population of the northern States is at present flowing. Immigration, as well as its own natural increase, has laid the population of the northern States under the necessity of leaving, in crowds of settlers, for the western regions; and great as these crowds have been, the northern States are at this moment experiencing the loss and demoralization which invariably arise in an overstocked labour market, and amongst crowds of unemployed. As it is a recognized axiom that free labour and slave labour cannot exist together, the effect of domesticating slavery in Kansas would be to shut out the teeming population of the northern States from the immense regions of Deseret and New Mexico, where rich and practically boundless fields are waiting for plough and seed, and thus to inflict on the northern States a vital injury. Even the pecuniary and industrial interests of the north have thus come to be bound up in the defeat of these efforts to extend slavery; and political and social interests are found to be in equal danger. A few months since, we were startled with news that, in a State of the American Union, the governor, and the state judges and officials, had been arrested, and the federal troops disarmed by an excited mob. More surprising still, mail after mail arrived, and told us of the unflinching and unscrupulous energy, the dense and efficient organization, and even stern dignity, with which the vigilance committee of San Francisco executed lynch law on the representatives of the federal government, as well as on private citizens who opposed its behests. The phenomenon was inexplicable till we learned that the southern Democrats in San Francisco had, by their superior political activity, and by political knavery, which had gone the length of falsifying the ballot-boxes, been able to monopolise the official honours, powers, and emoluments of the State; and that, by continuing to use these powers in the spirit in which they had been secured, they had long excited an indignant feeling, which, on the murder of the most popular republican editor, broke out into indignant action on the part of the entire population. Even at Washington, the corrupt state of things, which the vigilance committee overturned, was so notorious, that no attempt was made to gainsay their demands, or to resent the affront to which federal authority had been exposed. And it would seem, as if not content with territorial and political aggression, the slaveholding interest is also resolved on social aggression. A Virginian Democratic organ recently says,—“The south maintains that slavery is right, natural, and necessary, and does not

depend upon difference of complexion. The laws of the slave States justify the holding of white men in bondage." A Carolina organ of the same party says,—“Master and slave is a relation in society as necessary as that of parent and child; and the northern States will yet have to introduce it. Their theory of free government is a delusion.” And another says,—“Free society, in the long run, is an impracticable form of society. It is everywhere starving, demoralized, and insurrectionary, . . . unnatural, immoral, and unchristian; it must fall, and give way to slave society—a social system old as the world, universal as man.” And a New York Democratic paper seriously proposes that all parents who fall into poverty be sold into slavery. It were unfair to the southerners to suppose that such opinions can be general even among them. At all events, the individual whom they have succeeded in electing as President will not bind himself to carry them out. Of Mr Buchanan's politics and principles the most discordant notions prevail; and that just because the man has got none, and never really had any. Opinions of his own he must have, like every other intelligent human being; but so far as his tactics and aims are concerned, he appears to know nothing beyond casting in his lot with the winning party. Of his political audacity we had a sufficient illustration in the famous Ostend manifesto, which declares that America will be warranted in arresting Cuba from Spain, if “justified by the great law of self-preservation.” This audacity, however, was assumed for a purpose, and has been laid aside now that the purpose can no longer be served by it; and though elected by the Democrats, it is not at all probable that Mr Buchanan will make of himself a Democratic partisan, except in so far as he sees the south to be the really preponderating influence. Meanwhile, he knows, as all the world knows, that the slaveholders are trembling, and resorting to the most desperate measures for the preservation of their very existence. In Tennessee, the planters are carrying out their policy in a most logical and consistent manner. They propose to prevent all assemblages of coloured people for social purposes, or for any purpose whatever—to prevent attendance on public worship where the preacher is a coloured man, and to prevent even white ministers, whose services are sanctioned by the slaveholders, from communicating with slaves except in presence of their owners. All holidays, too, it is proposed to abolish; and husbands separated from their wives are only to be allowed to visit them when furnished with a special pass from their owners. A whole code of regulations in this spirit has been prepared. One of its originating circumstances is significant. It seems that, during the recent presidential contest, the planters had held public meetings for the purpose of denouncing free-soilism and free-soilers. By attending these meetings, or hanging about the doors, the slaves were made aware that in the north their freedom and welfare were being sought by a party so strong as to excite great apprehensions in the minds of their masters. We cannot wonder that the slaves were not at all convinced by the arguments which satisfied their owners. The news spread like wildfire that a day of deliverance was at hand; and the very existence of such a hope was a danger

which the planters of Tennessee felt they must put down at any cost. They have resolved to endeavour to reduce their slaves even lower than before in the scale of intelligence, and to shut out every idea from their minds except those communicated for a sinister purpose by hated lips. Such policy never ultimately succeeded in the darkest ages, and there is no reason for supposing that it can prevail in Tennessee. It will only the more provoke and the more aggravate a terrible reaction, and incur more deeply the judgments with which public crime is, sooner or later, inevitably visited. Other atrocities, perpetrated during the late slave insurrections, will probably never be known to the world. A recent traveller in Kentucky saw a slave tortured to death, in order to elicit a confession which it was supposed he had it in his power to make. And even among the ordinary every-day circumstances of slave life, incidents occur fitted to make us tremble for the country in which they are so familiar. A short time ago, a traveller in Virginia saw a striking illustration of the demoralizing and even inhumanizing domestic influences of slavery. An intelligent looking mulatto, on the top of the coach, had been sent from home on the pretence that he was to carry a letter to a particular stage of the road; and only discovered, when the driver refused to let him off at that stage, that he had seen his mother for the last time, and was being carried to the slave-pen by order of his owner, who was also his father. The young man, at a part of the road which skirted a thick wood, leaped off the coach and disappeared. Information of the fact was immediately left at the neighbouring house of a man, whose grown-up sons made it their ordinary avocation to hunt runaway negroes with a pack of trained dogs. Dark as are the prospects of slavery politically, its position in the light of divine law and justice is infinitely more dreadful.

But we must hasten to the second aspect under which we proposed looking at the subject—the relations of slavery to the civilized world. And an important fact which here meets us is, that Great Britain mainly supports South American slavery. Last year, the southern States produced about 3,000,000 bales of cotton, and of these Great Britain purchased about 2,000,000. What matters it that we have freed all our own slaves, and that we maintain our armed police on the African coast, if we are content to make African slavery so largely profitable? This question has been so often asked, that it no longer commands attention. Here, as elsewhere, however, Providence is compelling us to feel, as well as to see, the iniquity of slavery. Our supply of cotton from the slave States is failing—failing largely and rapidly, and, to all appearance, permanently. A New Orleans paper shows, on authentic statistical authority, that while the increase in the production of cotton, during the last ten years, has not exceeded nine per cent., the increase in consumption has been at the rate of sixteen per cent.; and current figures show that unless some check on consumption occur, for which there is no reason to look, there must in a few years be a large deficiency in our supply of American cotton. What that deficiency will mean, unless otherwise made up, Manchester and Glasgow will be able to tell us. As for the remedy of

this state of matters, the New Orleans paper to which we refer unhesitatingly advises a return to the slave trade with Africa; and this it terms, with respectful obeisance to the spirit of the age, "applying the principle of Free Trade to the labour system of the South." This proposal has been met with opposition; but the opposition takes its stand on grounds that render it not less of a morally painful spectacle than the proposal itself. The opposition, on the part of Virginia and the southern States, has been caused, not by any difference of opinion as to the merits of slavery, but solely by the antagonistic interests of what we may call the slave-consuming and the slave-producing States. Some of the older States have had their soil deteriorated by the baneful effects of slave culture, and are accustoming themselves to look for their profits to the breeding and sale of slaves. The export of negroes from Virginia, during the ten years prior to 1850, was estimated at upwards of 10,000 per annum. States such as Georgia, that have still a wide expanse of fertile soil upon which to commence operations, are anxious to have the supply of slaves increased and their price reduced—hence the antagonism in the South on the subject of slave importations. Of course, it is only as to a direct and legitimized slave trade that this discussion prevails; for it is well known that the African slave trade is at this moment being actively prosecuted by American vessels, fitted out at the port of New York. The United States flag prohibits the right of search, and is thus doubly responsible for this vile traffic,—firstly, in permitting it to be carried on clandestinely in vessels fitted out in the chief American harbour; and secondly, in preventing other nations from putting down a public crime, obnoxious to the law of America itself. A New York paper recently described the present mode of evading the law. The speculator negotiates at New York for the charter of a suitable ship, and the charter contains a provision that the vessel may be purchased if desired when she arrives at her destination. The cargo consists mainly of the lumber necessary to fit up the ship for a slave cargo. She proceeds to the African coast under the protection of the American flag; and before taking on board her slave cargo, the ceremony of selling the ship is gone through, in order that the New York owners may no longer be legally responsible for her proceedings. Honourably-minded Americans, of every political opinion, are scandalized at the practice, but have not yet found out an available remedy; nor will they, so long as the pecuniary temptation continues so great. The current price of male negroes, on the African coast, is quoted at from eight to forty dollars a-head; women and children from three to four dollars. This value is not paid in money, but generally in goods; and the sort of goods most in request on the African coast are, we are told, brass bracelets, glass beads, and other articles of coarse and gaudy trinkery, along with ardent spirits. The cargoes are kidnapped throughout the country, and kept in large cheaply-got-up buildings, called barracoons, erected along the coast in obscure corners. There the victims are kept at different kinds of easy work to preserve their health and market value. They are kept in irons; and as a farther precaution, each barracoon has its peculiar brand, by

which an indelible mark is burned into the arm, leg, or other part of the body ; and disobedience or mutiny is terminated by the pistol of the agent. In Cuba, these negroes fetch up to eight hundred and one thousand dollars each ; so that the profits, notwithstanding the invariably heavy mortality on the voyage, are so large that the speculator can afford to burn the ship after it has made a single trip, in order to avoid detection. And so secretly are the preliminary arrangements made, that even the seamen engaged for the voyage do not know, in many instances, of the work in which they are to be employed, till they are set about constructing a slave-deck out of the lumber on board. Then any scruples they may entertain are usually removed by the bounty-money promised them.

We were lastly to allude to the character and import of the discoveries of Dr. Livingston in Africa, and to the duties to which these discoveries point. Dr. Livingston's travels are perhaps altogether the most wonderful that have ever been accomplished. He left this country comparatively an unknown man, but slenderly endowed with financial resources, and uncheered by the patronage of the influential. He travelled first from Cape of Good Hope to a point on the western coast, at the tenth degree of south latitude. Thence he penetrated directly into the interior, and prosecuted his researches till he had reached the east coast. These journeyings have occupied sixteen years of his life ; and the researches for which they were undertaken have been carried out in a most intelligent and conscientious spirit. Dr. Livingston rendered himself familiar with the geographical, the mineralogical, the agricultural, and the industrial characteristics of the countries through which he passed. He introduces us for the first time to mighty rivers that form convenient and ready-made highways into the interior of Africa. And in that interior, on the vast spaces that our best maps leave blank, he shows us fertile and salubrious regions, richly endowed by nature, and inhabited by numerous and robust populations. He has found a new world in the heart of the old. And all this he has been enabled to achieve by his own individual energy and zeal, the thousands of miles of his journeyings having been gone over chiefly on foot. And the spirit in which he prosecuted his discoveries was not more admirable than that in which he comes home to tell us of them. He refuses the credit of having really done anything. He has only, he says, found out how much has to be done ; and he is preparing to return, for the remainder of his life, as a Christian missionary among the teeming tribes he has made known to us, and on whose behalf he claims our sympathy and aid. We cannot but regard this man as having been sustained by Providence for a great and momentous work. Even in a merely commercial point of view, his discoveries will prove of vast importance. Hitherto we have been pitching our little stations on the western coast, amid the malaria and deadly disease of the river mouths and barren shores, and have come in contact with border tribes, whose intercourse with white men has in a great measure been restricted to their traffic with the slave dealer, and who have acquired only the vices of civilization. In the south, again, the descendants of the Dutch

colonists, known as the Boers, have set themselves as a barrier between the influences of Christianity and the central southern tribes of the Bechuanas, over whom, by their superior intelligence and energy, and their exclusive possession of fire-arms, they rule with a sway of the cruellest oppression. Dr Livingston was in the country of these oppressed people for years, and saw much of their wrongs. But it was after he passed on to the north, above twenty degrees of south latitude, that he found the beautiful and well-watered country we have already alluded to. This country he regards as the home of the true negro family; and he found its inhabitants most anxious for every sort of barter and commerce. What is still more interesting and important, he found them exceedingly accessible to Christian instruction and truth. Even their natural prejudices and superstitions appear favourable to evangelistic labour. They believe in One Supreme Being; and, when a man dies suddenly, they say, "God has killed him." A missionary they regard as "a thing not to be killed." One chief asked Dr Livingston's permission "to beat the gospel into his people" by physical means; and to the reply, that belief was never produced in that way, he answered, "Oh, you do not know them so well as we do: we are sure that we could beat them into belief if we tried." And, as bearing equally on the prospects of commerce and of missionary enterprise, Dr Livingston tells us that the English are known among these simple-minded savages as "the tribe that loves the black man." The soil of the fair regions in the centre of Africa was found to be peculiarly adapted to the growth of cotton; and nowhere in the world is labour cheaper or more abundant. On the banks of the Zambesi, again, Dr Livingston found coal cropping out from the surface of the ground in seams of from forty-eight to fifty-eight inches in thickness; and coffee—the seeds of which are supposed to have been introduced to the continent by the Jesuits, and propagated over it by birds—was found growing extensively. Many other articles of valuable merchandise, such as bees'-wax, are constantly lost for want of a market. Here, then, is a region opened up to us to which we may transfer our South American commerce. And here is a means of destroying, at once and finally, the horrible traffic in human beings. Provide the Africans in their native plains with profitable labour, and the enhanced value of human life will of itself be sufficient to arrest that slave trade which all our slave squadrons have been unable wholly to suppress. How wonderful are the remedies of Providence compared with the workings of human ingenuity! British capital, in hundreds of millions, has been spent in the South American marts of slave produce, and substantially in support of slavery; yet a curse is found at the root of the system, morally, politically, and commercially, which is accomplishing what abolitionists have in vain striven to bring about. Again, the experience of our weak stations on the pestilential coast of Africa has been quoted, as showing the futility of further efforts in that direction; and now the great populous centre of the continent is opened up to our view, and shown to be a field in which, with comparatively little effort or risk, we may, by the Divine blessing, be enabled to secure incalculable results. The central popula-

tion of Africa are literally crying, "Come over and help us;" and British shipping and commerce are offered great material inducements to become the handmaids of the missionary. The field in which we have been spending our millions in support of a desolating and soul-ruining system is being closed on us, and simultaneously a field in which we may spend these millions to our own commercial advantage, and in the way of bringing about the regeneration of a numberless population, is opened to us.

To recapitulate our somewhat desultory argument—we have seen that British gold and British manufacturing power have been supporting African slavery, while the vile system is failing to accomplish the purpose for which it has been so wickedly maintained; and we have seen that slaveholding has proved morally an unmitigated curse, and that politically and socially it is fast bringing about its own destruction. We see, on the other hand, that Providence is offering us a field of enterprise and industry, which may be cultivated, not only without identifying us in any way with the iniquity of slavery, but in the way of cutting off at its source the imported supplies of that system, and of spreading the blessings of the gospel and the benefits of civilization among myriads of benighted and hitherto neglected human beings. It will be the prayer of every Christian heart that this great door and effectual may be speedily entered by the Christian missionary, and that, by the Divine blessing on the use of appointed means, Ethiopia may soon stretch out her hands to God.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

What is Christian Baptism? with Remarks on the Publication of the Rev. D. Wallace of Paisley, entitled "Christian Baptism: Is it the Immersion of Believers, or the Sprinkling of Infants, as testified by Pedobaptists?" Paisley: Alex. Gardner.

THE author of this work is known as the able advocate of Bible truth in opposition to various kinds of error. Some of his works have been already noticed with high commendation in our pages, and the work before us evinces the same discriminating views of divine truth—the same full mastery of the subject under discussion, and the same aptitude in the exposition and application of Scripture as the one supreme arbiter in all matters of faith and practice. This work, however, scarcely answers to its leading title—"What is Christian Baptism?" It is chiefly occupied in remarks on the work of Mr Wallace, whose positions are thoroughly overthrown. While he treats his opponent with all respect, he feels himself, and makes his readers feel, that he has the fullest advantage of Mr W. at every step of the argument, and is equally at home in the appeal to the dictates of inspiration, the records of history, or the writings of persons of high name—of which he demonstrates that Mr Wallace had made an unfair use, in partial or imperfect extracts. As a specimen of the clearness and force of conviction with which our author prosecutes his argument, we give the following as to the meaning of the Greek word *bapto* :—

"In the Greek translation of Daniel by Theodotion,—usually printed as part of the Septuagint,—the word *bapto* occurs twice, in reference to Nebuchadnezzar's body, which, it is said, 'was *wet* (or *baptized*) with the dew of heaven' (Dan. iv. 88).

"The Greek translator of Daniel does not say that the body of the king was *sprinkled* 'with the dew of heaven'; but he uses a word which obviously *includes* sprinkling.

"Now, one such case of baptism—one such application of the word *bapto* is, in our apprehension, worth all the opinions of all the critics put together. It is an occurrence of the word in circumstances which fix its meaning absolutely and incontrovertibly. It is a case which any one can fully understand, and which it seems impossible to mistake. We see the thing as it were with our own eyes. Critics and polemics may say that *bapto* means 'to dip, and *never* expresses anything but mode;' but with such a case before us, we cannot believe them. As the poor man said to the priest about transubstantiation, 'it will not *believe* for us.'"

A Letter to the Rev. D. Wallace, Baptist Minister, Paisley, in reply to his Tract, entitled "A Vindication and Rejoinder, in a Letter to A. G." Paisley: Alex. Gardner.

WE do not wonder though Mr Wallace felt keenly A. G.'s exposure and refutation of his arguments in the various positions in which he imagined he had intrenched himself, regarding the mode and subjects of baptism, that he was tempted to renew the battle in the work which he denominates "A Vindication and Rejoinder, in a Letter to A. G." But we think he has been ill advised, and acted rashly. It is plain that he over-estimated the strength of his position, and his own ability to defend it, and that he had not measured with a discriminating eye the calibre and resources of his opponent when he ventured to meet him in the field of controversy. The letter of our author makes it manifest that, instead of strengthening his argument, he has weakened it, and that instead of gaining he has rather suffered still farther in his reputation as a fair or successful polemic by his new work.

Our readers will thank us for giving the following quotation, though rather long, from our author's letter to Mr Wallace:—

"This seems the most fitting place for noticing your criticism on the two occurrences of *baptizo*, to which I formerly referred, as cases in which that term cannot possibly signify to dip or to immerse. In reference to these, you remark, 'Give us *one such case* and the controversy is at an end, and you will be entitled to the thanks of the whole Christian world' (p. 21). Allow me to say, that though I feel quite confident of being able to give you 'one such case,' I do not imagine that I shall thereby bring the 'controversy to an end;' and hence have no hope of obtaining the 'thanks of the whole Christian world.' I shall endeavour, however, to do my duty in the matter conscientiously, and as in the sight of Him to whom we must all render an account. His approval—his 'well done'—is of more value than even 'the thanks of the whole Christian world.'

"The first of the two instances formerly referred to, and to which I again request attention, is in 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, where the apostle says,—'All our fathers were *under* the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all *baptized* unto Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea.' To understand this language properly, we must read in connection with it, Exod. xiv. 19-23: 'The pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood *BEHIND THEM*; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea *dry land*; and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the *dry ground*; and the waters were a wall unto them, on their right hand and on their left.'

"Such are the simple facts of the case; and the question to be explicated from these facts and statements is, Were the Israelites *immersed*? and if so, in *what* were they *immersed*? To maintain that they were immersed in *the sea*, would

be to contradict the plain statement of Moses, that 'the children of Israel WALKED UPON DRY LAND in the midst of the sea' (ver. 29). But were they not immersed in the cloud? The inspired historian says that 'the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood (not above their heads, but) BEHIND them; and it came BETWEEN the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel.' Now, there is no immersion of any kind here. But the apostle, you will tell me, says that they were all 'under the cloud.' This expression may either mean that the 'cloud hung over their heads,' or, as I formerly suggested, that they were 'under the guidance and protection of the cloud.' This latter interpretation, besides embodying an obvious and undeniable fact, harmonizes and reconciles the two statements of Paul and Moses: whereas the other interpretation—which you patronise—is hardly consistent with the account in the book of Exodus, unless you suppose that the statement of Paul refers to a different occasion from the passage through the Red Sea. But even supposing it otherwise,—even supposing that the cloud did 'hang over their heads,'—that is not immersion in the proper sense of the term, and as you yourself explain it. To be 'under a cloud,' in this sense, is surely a different thing from being immersed in it. When you enclose a letter in an envelope, you cover it; but people would laugh at you, were you to say that you immersed it. You say that the Israelites were 'enveloped, covered, the same as every object is when immersed' (p. 22). Now, this is just a clumsy way of admitting that they were not immersed, but were merely 'enveloped or covered.' But there is no evidence that they were 'enveloped.' That is your assertion; but where is the proof of it? I challenge you to produce evidence that either the sea or the cloud was within a hundred feet of them; and if you call that immersion, you completely shift the ground of the dispute. It is no longer, 'Were the Israelites immersed?' but, 'What is immersion?' Allow me to remind you that the question is not, 'Were the Israelites 'enveloped or covered?' but, 'Were they immersed?' This is the point in dispute; and I cannot allow you to run away from it. You ask me—

"Were you on the top of a mountain, and did a cloud cover it, would you not be immersed in the cloud? You would be hid from the view of those below; and was not this the condition of the Israelites in respect to the Egyptians?" (p. 22).

"Here are two questions. To the first I answer, No: I should be enveloped in the cloud, not immersed in it. To the second question, I answer, Yes: the Israelites were 'hid' from the view of the Egyptians; but not in consequence of the former being enveloped or immersed in the cloud; but simply because the cloud 'stood between' the two parties. 'It was a cloud and darkness to them; but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all night' (ver. 20).

"You remark, page 22,—'It is said the Israelites were baptized; and the word must mean something.' No doubt it means 'something': but does it mean immersion? That is the question. Let me ask you to give it a direct answer, Yes or No. I can scarcely believe, after what has been said, that even you will venture to answer it in the affirmative. But I suppose you will ask me, *What* does it mean, if not immersion? And perhaps you may consider me a very great philological heretic, when I answer, that the Israelites are said to have been baptized just because they were not immersed. Let not the answer startle you. If you reflect on all the circumstances of the case, you will see that no other answer can be given. Observe, the Egyptians were immersed, but not baptized. And if the Israelites had been immersed in the same way, they would not have been baptized. Nay, more; if they had been immersed, though they had, like Paul's shipwrecked companions, 'escaped all safe to land,' they would not have been baptized, in the sense of the apostle. This is, I think, plain. They are said to have been baptized, therefore, because, by the miraculous intervention of the cloud, and the miraculous drying up of the sea, they were enabled to walk through it on 'the dry ground;' while the Egyptians were overwhelmed in the rolling flood, and 'sank as lead in the mighty waters.' They were thus 'baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea.' They were in this way brought under the weightiest obligations, and involved in a most solemn profession, to love and serve God, and obey his servant Moses. Hence we read, 'And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses' (Exod. xiv. 31).

"I have thus given you 'one case' of baptism, in which there was no immersion. But is 'the controversy at an end?' We shall see."

Youthful Devotedness: or, The Youth of the Church Instructed in the Duties of Practical Religion. By Thomas Houston, D.D., author of "Parental Duties," &c., Pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Knockbracken. Second Edition. Paisley: Alex. Gardner. 1857.

WE are glad to see a second edition of this excellent work. The object, to the promotion of which Dr Houston has devoted his talents in this treatise, is one, the importance of which can scarcely be over-estimated,—that of giving a right direction to the sentiments, the aspirations, and the pursuits of the young, in their duty to God, to themselves, to the Church, and society. Our author possessed special qualifications,—by the deep interest which he feels in the young—by careful observation—by extensive reading, and by the practical bent of his mind,—for the task, to the accomplishment of which his energies were devoted, the results of which appear in the volume before us. There are few works which it would give us more pleasure to see the young reading with care, and which we could recommend with more confidence, as eminently calculated as a means, in the hand of the Spirit, to promote their temporal as well as their spiritual welfare, and render them instruments of advancing the glory of God and the good of men.

The book is divided into six chapters on the following general subjects:—I. Baptism. II. Conversion. III. Profession of Religion. IV. Character befitting those who make a Profession of Religion. V. Social Relations, and the Influence of the Young on Society. VI. Preparation for Death. Each of these subjects is largely discussed, under different divisions.

In the sixth chapter, the subject of the Christian ministry is pretty fully considered, and its claims are urged in an appeal to young men themselves, to parents, and to the Church; and the condition and prospects of the Church in our own and other countries are such as to call the serious attention of Christians to this matter. We would have been glad to have given quotations from the different chapters, but must limit ourselves to one or two in this department of the work. In reference to the general duty of the Church, Dr Houston says—

"It is the paramount duty of the Church to provide an able and faithful ministry. This position is susceptible of the clearest and fullest proof. It is matter of express Divine prescription. The great ends for which the Gospel ministry was instituted—the Church's mission to expound, defend, and propagate the truth, and to convert the nations—and the example of the Church in the primitive and purest times—all show that this is to be regarded as a principal duty of the Church, the due performance of which is of the most salutary consequence, and the neglect of which must be most injurious."

In respect to the duty of such members of the Church as are in prosperous worldly circumstances, our author makes the following suggestion:—

"Members of the Church, who have considerable worldly prosperity, would honour God, and do an important service to Christ, by charging themselves with the expense of training deserving youths for the ministry.

"The Church," he adds, "should, moreover, establish *seminaries* for the instruction and training of candidates for the ministry—place them under the care of able instructors, and undertake to supply the funds requisite for this purpose. As much

as possible, she should aim to have the education of the rising ministry exclusively under her own control, direction, and superintendence. By making such a provision for the instruction of her own candidates for the ministry, the Church can at all times inspect and regulate the course of their education—see that it be sound, thorough, and faithful—and have a proper control over the instructors. By this means, too, the Church can furnish a more extensive, accurate, and complete course of instruction, availing herself of the best instructors, and of all improvements in education."

In his appeal to the young men themselves, the following questions are given, contained in an address quoted from the *Episcopal Recorder* for 1839, with special respect to the claims of the Christian ministry:—

"Is there any office in which we can render more substantial service to our fellow-men, or more advance the glory of God?"

"Should not the good of society and the glory of God influence us in the choice of a profession?"

"Is there any office which affords more or higher prospects of true happiness in this world?"

"Is there any office which affords as many incitements to piety—as many helps and facilities in the work of salvation, or more comfortable prospects of future glory and reward?"

"Does it require the relinquishment of any habit or indulgence necessary to the highest enjoyment?"

"Are not multitudes in the world, possessed of the ability to serve God in the work of the ministry, prevented by love of ease, or of pleasure, or profit, or of distinction?"

"While it is admitted that much may be done in every condition of life for the advancement of piety and the spiritual benefit of fellow-men, can as much be done in any other, for these ends, as in the ministry?"

Through the fertility of Dr Houston's mental stores of illustration on practical subjects, there is frequently an exuberance of this that is in some hazard of being felt tedious by the youthful reader. On this account, an abridgment of the work, not in the way of setting aside, but as an auxiliary to the larger work, would be a desideratum. We felt in one or two instances that the argument is rather overdrawn, an error into which we are liable to fall when very earnest to gain any point. And though we are fully satisfied as to Dr Houston's soundness in the faith, as to the necessity of the influences of the Spirit to the right discharge of all duty, and of ever cherishing a sense of constant dependence on Him—for this is once and again expressed—yet, in urging duty, it would have been desirable that this had been throughout still more distinctly in the spirit indicated in the words of the apostle,—“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Phil. ii. 12, 13). There is ever need of care in the inculcation of duty, either from the pulpit or the press, either on young or old, to connect this with the exhibition of the truth that salvation, in all its parts, is through grace, as the apostle does when he says,—“By grace are ye saved through faith, and *that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God*” (Eph. ii. 8). But perhaps there is nothing in which those who are most thoroughly imbued with evangelical truth more fail in these times than in this—in exhortations to duty, especially to the young.

These things are stated with all deference to the worthy and

devoted author, with whose views, with rare exceptions indeed, we so cordially concur—whose work needs no commendation from us—deserves extensive circulation, and will be the more prized by the class of readers for whose benefit it is specially designed the more their understandings and hearts are imbued with that “pure and unde-filed religion” which is so earnestly pressed home on their attention in every one of its pages.

GENERAL RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

ENGLAND.

THE effects of a kind of mania for the introduction of German literature into Britain has already produced baneful fruits in England. There is some reason to think that a considerable number of the ministers of two large and influential Nonconformist denominations have become disaffected to the doctrines of grace, for adherence to which they were long distinguished. “If any one,” says Mr Grant, the editor of the *Morning Advertiser*, “could until now have doubted the correctness of the representations which have been made respecting the fearful prevalence of German Rationalism among the two evangelical Nonconformist denominations, it is impossible that any such doubts should be entertained after the course which, with the exception of the *British Banner*, the Independent and Baptist journals have adopted with reference to the controversy. The *Eclectic Review*, the *Patriot*, the *Nonconformist*, the *Christian Times*, and the *Freeman*—all more or less under the influence of Independent and Baptist ministers,—have identified themselves with the cause of the ‘Fifteen,’ and consequently committed themselves to the *Theology* of the work which the ‘Protest’ indorsed and recommended.”

The “controversy” referred to above, and the means by which the existence of a wide-spread heretical bias came to be discovered, is briefly stated in the following passage in the preface of a pamphlet by W. Palmer:—

“THE CASE STATED.

“Some time since, Mr. Lynch, a Dissenting minister of the Congregational Denomination, published a small volume, entitled ‘The Rivulet: a Contribution to Sacred Song.’ This book is not only a book of poetry, but a ‘Hymn Book,’ designed as well for the chapel as the chamber, recommended for use in public worship, and used by the church and congregation over which the author presides.”

“Most of the London journals, and some monthly periodicals, have reviewed this book in laudatory strains. But a copy of it having been sent to the editor of the *Morning Advertiser* for review, the editor of that journal, after speaking courteously of Mr Lynch, whom he did not know, proceeded to adjudicate upon the book, which he did know; and in giving judgment thereon, condemned it as a ‘Hymn Book,’ on the ground of its being untheological and unspiritual: a negation of doctrinal beliefs and Christian experience. In a second notice, he inserted and examined three entire hymns from the ‘Rivulet,’ sent by a medical gentleman for the purpose of reversing the editor’s judgment, who concluded his article by asking Mr Lynch if he really believed in the proper divinity of Christ, in his atoning sacrifice, in his mediatorial work, in the innate depravity of human nature, and in the personality, the regenerating agency, and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, in the sense

those doctrines were held by evangelical Christians? Less unwise than some of his friends, Mr Lynch preferred silence to speech, leaving the book to answer if it would, and letting judgment go by default. So far there was nothing very remarkable, saving the editor's urbanity and clemency. But in January, 1856, the *Eclectic Review* held up the book as a 'charming volume,' commended its religious excellencies, especially 'those aspirations of the *Christian's heart* which have the *Saviour* for their object!' A copy of this review was forwarded to the editor of the *Morning Advertiser*, who reviewed the review, expressed regret for the *Eclectic*, and maintained his own opinion. Had the *Eclectic* and the *Morning Advertiser* been left to settle the matter as they best could, probably nothing serious would have grown out of it. But Mr Newman Hall had publicly recommended Mr Lynch's 'Hymn Book' at a meeting of the Colonial Missionary Society; and a gentleman of some importance had furnished the *Eclectic* with the review. Was Mr Hall's admiration to degenerate into an erring rhapsody, or Mr ———'s critical judgment to go for nothing? Who could think so? Besides, it was a layman *versus* ecclesiastics. Here commenced the real mischief. Here the case assumed a new phase. The banks broke and the fens were inundated. The editor of the *Eclectic* reviewed the book himself, and indorsed the judgment of the gentleman who supplied the article. Fifteen Dissenting ministers of the Independent Denomination—men of mark, too, some of them—publicly protested against the articles in the *Morning Advertiser*. The 'Protest' itself was the most remarkable document of modern times: remarkable as much for what it did say, as for what it did not say; as much for saying what it did not mean, as for meaning what it did not say. Viewed in relation to its composition, its arrangement, its logic, its spirit, and its intent, it will long remain—like Haman's gallows—a singular specimen of human contrivance subverted by the power of God. How professed ministers of Christ could be so unmindful of themselves, of the gospel they preach, the flocks they oversee, the truth they are said to love, and the public they are supposed to serve, are questions which may task the talents of the philosopher, the casuist, and the historian.

"The readers of this pamphlet," Mr Palmer adds, "will bear in mind that a crisis has arrived—too soon, indeed, for the Negative party, who are striving to conceal their Neological tendencies; and who, with their secret sympathisers, are adopting covert measures for the purpose of deceiving the simple-minded. These men, by the use of smooth and honied accents placed upon the words cross, gospel, love, peace, union, brotherhood, &c., are endeavouring to hush up matters anyhow and everywhere, in order that they may settle down quietly and diffuse their poison without resistance among the churches over which they preside, or in which they are. Let the churches look well to this fact."

In the following sentences we have Mr Palmer's definition of the Negative Theology, which has received and is receiving such countenance:—

"*Negative Theology!* 'What is it?' some will ask. 'How is it to be known? and in what body does it come?' It comes in no body at all; for it has none: none, at least, of its own. Neither has it a *soul*; for it is as destitute of a soul as it is of a body. It ignores all *bodies* of divinity; all theological *systems*. It is a negation of all the doctrines of sovereign grace; a substitution of natural for supernatural religion. At its core it is Pantheistic, and in its various forms it is implicitly Deistical. In a word, it is an apostasy from the truth as it is in Jesus, and from the light of Revelation to the darkness of reason."

As a further proof of the extent to which German speculations have spread, it appears that Dr Davidson, Biblical Professor in the Lancashire Independent College, has, as editor of one of the volumes of Horn's "Introduction to the Critical Study of the Holy Scriptures," introduced most dangerous opinions as to their inspiration. This was so flagrantly at variance with what had been the received truth on this all-important subject, that some investigation was found necessary; and if the fact be as stated by the *Morning Advertiser*, it is cause of deep sorrow. "We are assured," says that paper, "that the

real reason why Dr Davidson is not only to be retained in his situation as Biblical Professor in Lancashire College, but regularly white-washed, is, that if he were to be condemned and expelled, Dr Vaughan, the President of the College, must share the same fate, similar charges of a virtual denial of the inspiration of the Scriptures, and of other grave heterodoxies, having been lately preferred against him." The terms of the report of the committee employed in the investigation of Dr Davidson's new volume are—

"That while this committee expresses its continued confidence in the general soundness of Dr Davidson's theological views, its appreciation of the value of his services to the college, and its regard to him personally, it is still of opinion that explanations of several parts of his recent work are due to the constituency of the college, on account of the incautious language which he has there employed, and, therefore, earnestly requests him to afford such explanations as speedily as may be consistent with due care in its revision, and in a spirit as kind and conciliatory as the exigency of the case may require, and a due regard to his own position may allow."

It is another evil sign that grossly infidel sentiments have been promulgated by one of the Oxford Professors, and that the Tractarian party are prepared to leave the new Popish dogma of the immaculate conception of Mary an open question. It is satisfactory, on the other hand, that the Court of Arches has condemned the Popish views of Archdeacon Denison as to the Lord's Supper, and that some of the innovations introduced by the Puseyite party in the Church of England have also been ordered to be discontinued. It is a favourable symptom, too, that the attempts of the Sabbath League (league against strict Sabbath observance) to extend their principles, have been successfully met in different places, and that the leaders of this party, who had seats in Parliament, have failed to obtain places in the election just terminated. But while the theoretical opinions of the Sabbath League have met with strenuous opposition, it is very mournful that the Sabbath traffic of various kinds, which has long prevailed in England, is now practised to a fearful extent in Scotland. The extent to which this prevails in Glasgow will appear from the following statement:—

"At the meeting of the Glasgow Town Council, on the 6th ultimo, deputations from the Established and Free Churches waited upon the Lord Provost, for the purpose of presenting memorials from their respective Presbyteries, praying for the adoption of some measure by which the present practice of opening shops on Sunday could be put a stop to. It was stated that the premises of the following are open for business on Sabbath:—316 fruiterers and confectioners, 269 traders in groceries and provisions, 432 sellers of milk, 65 barbers, 105 eatinghouse-keepers, 15 keepers of oyster and fish stores, 6 news-rooms, 32 keepers of pie-houses, 34 tobacconists, 99 green-grocers, 2 fleshers, 16 managers of clubs, and 1 stationer. The Lord Provost assured the reverend deputation, and the other gentlemen, that the subject would have the most careful consideration of the Council."

MADAGASCAR.

After a long interval, during which little has been heard of the condition of Christians in this island, and the aspect of affairs, it gives us no ordinary pleasure to be able at present to give the following account of the kind reception which Mr Ellis has received, indicating a great change in the administration, and we anticipate that the next

communication from this gentleman will contain much cheering information regarding the long-oppressed converts to Christianity in this part of the heathen world, and the wide field now open there for missionary enterprise. The short account given below is furnished in the *News of the Churches*, which has large claims on public support:—

"The Overland Mail brings a letter from Mr. Ellis full of interest, as bearing witness to the cordiality of his reception by all parties at the capital of Madagascar.

"Frequently during the journey messengers from the capital had been met, bringing letters and expressions of welcome from the Prince and his friends; and, on approaching the last stage, these messages, with other modes of attention, became more frequent. It was also the wish of the Queen that such attentions should be as respectful as possible. For this purpose the visitor was requested to wait at a short distance from Antaimanario, until preparations were made for properly conducting him into her capital. A palanquin was then prepared for his use, covered in part with a velvet cloak, and three chiefs on horseback rode beside him, with a numerous retinue in attendance. In this style he was escorted to the house which has been prepared for his residence.

"In all that is to him of deepest interest, Mr Ellis states that his hopes are more than realized; but the general state of the country is much the same as for some time past, except that greater quietness and more apparent cordiality exists between different parties. Beyond this he was not able to describe much in relation to society at the capital, because his journal, concluding with his arrival there on the 27th of August, had to be sent away by the bearers returning to the coast. He had consequently not then seen the Queen, though anticipating an interview; but, on the evening before sending off his letter, he had enjoyed a most interesting visit from the Prince, accompanied by the Queen's Secretary, who speaks English well, having been educated in this country.

"Mr Ellis describes the Prince as being youthful in appearance, very prepossessing, frank and easy in his manners, dressed in the style of a European gentleman of rank, and in all respects exhibiting the suavity of behaviour which is indicative both of good breeding and of natural goodness of disposition. They were soon at perfect ease with each other; and if the friendly, confiding, and even affectionate nature of this interview may be accepted as an indication of what is to follow, there is every reason to hope that an intimacy will be formed such as will more than repay the comforts sacrificed, the difficulties encountered, and the privations endured.

"Mr Ellis concludes his journal by saying, 'Ever since intelligence received a short time before my leaving England, I have felt no doubt it was my duty to come here; and the events of this evening have confirmed the impression, even considered separately from those which formed the more immediate object of my journey.'

By later accounts, it appears that Mr Ellis had to leave without having obtained either the satisfaction or the information which he so earnestly wished, not being permitted to remain longer. More details will be given, it is hoped, soon.

INDIA.

VAZAGAPATAM—The following account of a young Brahmin convert is very striking:—

"It may interest your committee," says Mr Hay, missionary at Vizagapatam, "to receive a brief account of the conversion of a young Brahmin, whom we had the pleasure of baptizing on Sunday last. Several years ago, Pulliah was a scholar in one of Major Brett's schools, where he first became acquainted with the Gospel, and was at one time deeply impressed by the preaching of a catechist supported by that faithful servant of Christ. At that time, he revealed his state of mind to no one except Bapaniah, an orphan lad, brought up in this mission, whose acquaintance he had made. The first thoughts that are usually suggested to the mind of an inquiring Hindoo prevailed for a while—the thought of his youth, and the superior knowledge of his parents and ancestors, held him back; but still he read the Gospel and Christian tracts, as well as Hindoo books, with the view of ascertaining the truth.

"The latter," he writes, "I always found to be full of folly and sin, without any true way of salvation, such as men need; while in Christian books I everywhere met with holiness, opposition to sin, and a true way of salvation through Jesus Christ, for sinners such as myself, stated in a plain and straightforward manner."

"As soon as his parents began to suspect what was working in his mind, to prevent his ruin, they entrusted him to the care of a brother-in-law who lives at Calingapatam, about eighty miles from this, where he obtained employment as a writer; and, engrossed with the affairs of this world, shortly became careless about those of another. Again, his correspondence with Bapaniah was made the means of rousing him up; though the fear of the world, and the shame of being counted an outcast, were still too strong for his faith, until one night after supper, when, having read a portion of the Bible and prayed, he went to bed, and began to revolve the past in his mind. 'Why,' thought he, 'should the fear of the men of this world, my fellow-sinners, always prevent me from publicly confessing the Saviour, praying to him, and serving him? If I dread the reproach of the world now, and delay, will they at any future period, should I embrace this religion, cease to reproach me? But though they reproach me here, when I enjoy blessedness with my Saviour there, those that behold it will glorify my God, and rejoice over me. In this world,' he thought again, 'a good son will not disown, but frankly acknowledge even a wicked father; and shall I, for fear of this world, despise the love of my Father, whose mercy is infinite, or refuse openly to confess his name? What more horrible sin can there be than this?' This, we may hope, was the teaching of the Spirit of God; for our young friend soon after obtained from his master leave of absence for a few days, and came here for the purpose of receiving baptism in the name of Jesus."

"As I had nowhere to put him, Mr and Mrs Wardlaw most kindly received him. That same day he wrote to his parents, who were then at Leassimcotta, about thirty miles from this, informing them of the step he had taken. Pulliah had been their chief support: they had leaned upon him, for he was an only son; and their hope, so far as they had any hope for the world to come according to Hindoo notions, rested mainly upon what he may do for them when their bodies are consumed."

"Hitherto he had been a dutiful son, and now he must inflict upon them the severest blow, and blast all their fondest hopes. When they came—I mean his father and mother and two sisters—it was thought advisable to admit only the father at first, and the meeting was very affecting. The feeble old man embraced him, and gave utterance to the bitterest lamentations, while the young believer, struggling with the warmest and best feelings of which humanity is susceptible, confessed his faith, and wiped the tears as they flowed down the wrinkled cheeks of his heart-broken parent. Everything was said that could be said to break his resolution; but now the clamour without became so great, that at his own request his mother and sisters were admitted into the room. Again the same scene was gone through—firmness of principle and filial love on the one side, bitter sorrow and anger on the other. The elder sister was the chief speaker. 'Why should you leave us?' she said; 'be a Christian if you will; come constantly to the missionaries; worship only at their feet; regard them as your God, but do not give up your caste. Live with us, eat our food, and believe only in them. What!' she said, with indignant eloquence, 'after having, from the life of an ant, or some other miserable insect, risen through I know not how many births to the rank of Brahmehood, do you now at once fall down to the condition of an ant-eater, and lose the benefit of all former transmigrations?' We all trembled for him during this trying interview; but grace prevailed, and it was truly refreshing to see one just emerging from heathen darkness, grasping the truth of Christ so firmly, while his soul was agitated by the distress he was causing, though innocently, to those he most loved on earth. At length, when sufficient opportunity had been afforded to his relatives to ascertain the reality of the change wrought in his mind, we advised him, if he still intended to follow Christ, to retire to another apartment and end the painful scene. This he did, and then we all knelt down and joined in prayer and thanksgiving to the Lord, who had given such a proof of the power of his love; while without, the bitterest curses were invoked on the blessed name of Jesus."

"Next morning the father came again, and had a long conversation in presence of his son with Mr Jagannathan and myself. He was now calm, and listened attentively when the Gospel and our need of salvation were explained to him. The Lord may yet bring him in; but in two days after the last interview, his son's funeral rites were performed."

"Last Sunday, 14th December, Pulliah was baptised in the Telooogo Chapel, in presence of a large congregation, comprising all castes and classes of the people, many of whom listened with very marked attention, while the Gospel and the love of God were explained, and pressed upon their acceptance, as the only way of life and peace. "Pulliah, which means sourness—a name quite unsuitable to our young friend—has been changed by the insertion of one letter, into Pauliah."

OBITUARY.

DIED—At Arbroath, on the 23d February, Mr David Sturrock, formerly manufacturer there, aged eighty-one years. He was sprung, we believe, from the peasantry, or small farmers, of his native county, and was a noble representative of a class of men now greatly diminished in numbers—who, in times of the last persecution, were more than a match, in argument, for the bishops and dignitaries of the Prelatical Church—who upheld the standard of the Secession in its early days, and adhered to the principles of its founders, when the current of popular opinion and prejudices set strongly in against them. Mr Sturrock, we understand, was brought up and educated in connection with the Church of Scotland; but, as he advanced to maturity of judgment, and perceived the blight of Moderatism and patronage to exercise a deadening and withering influence over her ministrations, he sought a communion more congenial to his taste and aspirations; and, after examining the principles and standards of the various denominations in the light of Scripture, he cast in his lot with the General Associate Synod. On the introduction of what was termed "new light" into that body, and their consequent defection from reformation principles, his acute and powerful mind soon detected their change of position, notwithstanding of their averments to the contrary; and he easily perceived their giving up the principles of national religion and responsibility, and the shadows of Voluntarism and spurious liberality looming in the distance, carrying with them the germs of Latitudinarianism and various other errors; and he gave his adherence to the Constitutional Presbytery. As our readers are all aware, this Presbytery afterwards united with the Protesters of 1820, and became the Original Secession Synod, of which Mr Sturrock continued a steady and enlightened adherent till his death. From the vigour and originality of his mind, and the genial warmth of his affections, Mr Sturrock was respected and beloved by the good of all denominations in his native place; and though latterly affected with dullness of hearing, he had many kind friends who loved to converse with him on topics interesting to all. He died full of days—having buried his wife and all his family—in calm, cheerful, and steady reliance on the merits of the Redeemer, and his latter end was peace. Mr Sturrock has also, we hear, made the congregation of Original Seceders, Arbroath, one of his legatees.

ERRATA.

- Page 205, line 21 from top—for "illiteral," read "illiberal."
 Page 205, line 8 from bottom—for "derision," read "decision."
 Page 208, line 3 from top—for "patronising," read "fraternising."
 Page 223, line 7 from bottom—for "mission," read "Missouri."

THE ORIGINAL SECESSION MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1857.

THE GLORY OF GOD DISPLAYED IN THE BUILDING UP OF ZION.

(CONTINUED FROM OUR LAST.)

II. We shall now, in the second place, mention some of the means which the Lord employs in the building up of Zion. It is He alone that *can* build her. This is specially His work; and if He do it not, it shall never be rightly done. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." But still He builds, in all the senses that we have stated, by means. The *first* means we shall advert to is a *gospel dispensation*. This, in building Zion, is His grand instrumentality. How are men brought to join the Church's fellowship, and enlist themselves as professors under the banner of Christ? Is it not either by the reading or the hearing of the word? "The Lord gave the word"—is His own divine language,—“and great was the company of those that published it.” Especially it is the word that is blessed for bringing sinners to an interest in Christ: “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” What caused the numerous Pentecostal conversions? It was just the gospel, accompanied by divine grace. When Peter preached, the multitudes were pricked in their hearts, and repented, and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. The Church's reformation and enlargement, in fine, and every other part of her upbuilding, is the fruit of a pure and scriptural dispensation of gospel ordinances. The gospel, preached purely and faithfully, and accompanied by the blessing of heaven, must awaken dormant zeal, and lead to the revival of the Lord's work in every respect in which it needs to be revived. What produced, as a means, the glorious reformation from Popery, but the labours of the angel seen flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwelt on the earth? But this angel was just Luther, and the

other Protestant ministers, proclaiming, with zeal and faithfulness, the pure gospel of the grace of God; and by the same instrumentality must the Church still be built up. How great, then, the blessing of a pure gospel dispensation; and how careful should we be to maintain and preserve it! If we would have our own souls edified, and sinners converted, and the Church reformed, and the world lying in wickedness reclaimed, let us labour to retain among us the precious means of grace, and strive together for the faith of the gospel.

2. The Lord builds up Zion by raising up in her *instruments peculiarly fitted for the work*. Saviours, it was predicted, would come up on Mount Zion; and these saviours were just men eminently qualified for delivering the Church out of her distresses, and maintaining and promoting in her the Lord's cause. Such a saviour, or instrument, was Moses. The Lord, by his hand, brought the Church out of her bondage, and set up in her His worship in a more glorious manner than ever she had enjoyed it before. The whole of the reforming Jewish kings, such as Asa, and Hezekiah, and Josiah, were such instruments. Such, particularly, were Ezra, and Nehemiah, and others, at the period referred to in the passage which we have chosen as the ground of our remarks. They not only repaired, literally, Zion's breaches, and rebuilt her walls, but restored the temple service in its purity, and brought the whole congregation, with confession of their sins, to devote themselves by covenant to God. Christ's apostles were, by way of eminence, such under-builders of Zion. They were chosen, and fitted, and sent forth by himself, to proclaim His name, and erect the glorious fabric of the gospel Church on the ruins of both Paganism and Jewish superstition. Hence His declaration concerning Paul in particular—"He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." Such was Luther in Germany, and Knox in our own land, and every one of the eminent Reformers that have appeared in the Church since their day. When Ebenezer Erskine was preaching his famous sermon on the stone which the builders rejected, he was just labouring in the blessed work of building up Zion. What were Wilson's Defence, Gib's Display, and the writings of M'Crie and Stevenson, and others now in the dust, but efforts put forth by instruments peculiarly fitted for rebuilding the dilapidated walls and glorious bulwarks of the city of the Church. Though God, therefore, can carry on His work by small means, and has often blessed remarkably very *feeble* instrumentality, yet He may be expected to bring forward men suited to great emergencies. Nor is He ever at a loss for such under-builders when the circumstances of Zion require them. When eminent instruments are taken away, we are apt to despair of the Lord's work; but for this there is no ground whatever. The same power that raised up *them* can raise up others with the same facility.

3. The Lord builds up the spiritual Zion of His Church through means of a *testimony for truth*. We refer not to a doctrinal testimony, or the declaration of the truth from the pulpit, nor to the testimony of professors individually considered. Testimony-bearing, in both these respects, is *dutiful*, and also important. But what we now allude to

is the Church's joint and judicial testimony, printed and published to the world. A banner of this character, to be displayed because of truth, God has often led the Church to adopt. Such were all the confessions of the Reformed Churches in Europe, and particularly the Westminster Standards, to which we, as a body, still adhere; and such all the other scriptural and seasonable testimonies which the Church, by her judicatories, has from time to time emitted. Such judicial declarations have been often greatly blessed for the maintenance of the Lord's cause upon the earth, and for its revival when peculiarly depressed. They expose error and defend the truth; tend to convince and reclaim the backsliding; and not only bind the Church together, preserving her union and uniformity, but point out to her the grounds of scriptural union when she is divided. A faithful testimony, rightly improved, is a very powerful instrument, even for the reviving of vital godliness in the soul, and bringing sinners, by conversion, to the Redeemer. Religion, both public and private, is at present low; and one reason of this, we doubt not, is the want of a judicial testimony, faithfully displayed by the Churches, against error, and in behalf of injured truth; and when the Lord builds up Zion, He will do so as the fruit of faithful testimony-bearing in her. A judicial testimony, indeed, is to the Church what a standard or ensign is to an army. Under it Christ's witnesses are marshalled and arrayed, and by its means they not only resist, but attack and overcome their opposing enemies; and such an ensign will the Church always require in proportion to the prevalence of apostacy and division.

4. The Lord builds up Zion by means of public confederation and vows, or, in other words, *religious covenanting*. This, we find, accordingly, has accompanied the most remarkable revivals of religion that have occurred in the history of the Church. Much as was the sin of the Jewish people in the wilderness, there was then a great improvement in the Church's circumstances. The moral law was given her in legible letters, so that every one that ran might clearly read. She received an extensive ritual of ceremonial ordinances, all symbolically pointing her to the Saviour; and the observance of the Sabbath was enforced with the utmost strictness. Nor can we doubt that there were many of the Lord's own people at that time in her. But all this reformation was connected with public and social vowing to God. It was homologated and reduplicated upon by the Sinai covenant. When the Church, again, entered Canaan, she purged the land from idolatry, and set up God's divinely-instituted worship in the place of it. But this, too, was the result of public covenanting. It was preceded by the renovation, in the plains of Moab, of the covenant entered into with God at Horeb. The most notable revivals, also, of the work of the Lord, that took place in aftertimes in the Jewish Church, were accompanied by solemn and social vowing, and the renewal of the covenant still binding on the land. Great was the reformation that was effected in the days of Asa. But *then* the people entered into covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and they swore to the Lord with a loud voice, and all Judah rejoiced at the oath; and the reformation in Josiah's time, and that at the return from Babylon, presented

the same glorious spectacle of a people devoting themselves to God. It was believed, on God's authority, and on the ground of past experience, that this was exercise eminently calculated to render reformation real and lasting, and stir up to more extensive reform; and, as such, it was engaged in with heart and soul, and one consent. To come, in a word, to gospel days and recent times, who requires to be informed how instrumental covenanting was in reviving, carrying on, and maintaining the Redeemer's cause in our own peculiarly privileged and beloved country? God led us, as a church and nation, to devote ourselves, by solemn oath and covenant, to himself; and, perhaps, nothing was more successful in either stirring up to duty, or doing battle against Popery and Prelacy, than the renewing, from time to time, of these solemn deeds; and we have every ground to believe that, when God returns to build up Zion from her present low and backsliding condition, He will employ this instrumentality, as He has done in former times. Guthrie's prediction on the scaffold shall be realized,—“The covenants—the covenants shall be Scotland's reviving.”

5. An eminent means by which the Lord builds up Zion is the *prayers* of His own believing people. The prayers of the righteous are described in Scripture as availing much; and in nothing do they avail more than in reviving the Lord's work in times of great sin and apostacy, and when religion in the soul, as well as externally, is low. As the prophet, by his prayers, brought the rain from the clouds, causing the dry and parched earth to bring forth its fruit, so do the godly, by the same means, become instrumental in opening the windows of heaven, and bringing down so abundantly the Spirit's influences on the Church, that she revives, and brings forth fruit meet for repentance, and to the glory and praise of God. Prayer, though itself a part of that work of the Lord that requires in sinning times to be revived, is yet an appointed and powerful means of its revival. It has in all times been, and will continue to be, one of the most successful means of building up Zion. The Lord's people are required, accordingly, to become His remembrancers for the reformation of His work in the Church. “Ye that make mention of the Lord,” declares the prophet, “keep not silence, and give him no rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” Nor have we this merely enjoined, but exemplified. “Wilt thou not revive us again,” declares the Psalmist, “that thy people may rejoice in thee;” and another inspired penman and holy man of God prays,—“O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years.” As ever we would see Zion built, extending, and prospering, let us be assiduous, and persevering, and earnest at a throne of grace.

6. We must not forget that the Lord builds up Zion by the *gracious operation of His Holy Spirit*. The Spirit, it is true, must not be classed among means. In carrying on the work of God in the Church, He is, strictly speaking, not an instrument, but an agent. But still it is through Him that the work is done. The building up of Zion is *through Christ*, in His surety-work on earth, and intercession in heaven, and kingly rule on His mediatorial throne; but it is specially and

more immediately through the efficacy of the Holy Ghost. None of all the other means of promoting Zion's interests, to which we have already referred, will be of any avail without the Spirit. *Briars and thorns* only will come up upon the land of God's people until the Spirit be poured from on high. Then only shall the wilderness become a fruitful field. The Spirit convinces of sin, and regenerates the soul, and carries on the work of holiness in the heart; and He only can reform the Church, and unite her, and enlarge her, and accomplish in her all God's gracious promises and predictions. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but the Spirit gives the increase. What a glorious prediction that in Hosea—"I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwelt under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine; the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon." This has all respect to the building up of Zion. But the dew that produces it is just the influences of the Holy Spirit. It is this we need above all things to quicken dead souls, and heal our backslidings, and remove our divisions, and bring us to the glory of the latter day, when Christ shall reign, not personally, but spiritually, upon the earth, and in a manner more glorious and blessed than ever He reigned in it before.

III. The last thing in the words which demands our consideration is the *glory* in which the Lord, when He builds up Zion, appears. "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory." This topic affords room for large discussion; but on it we shall not at present detain the reader.

Let it be remarked, in the first place, generally, that the glory intended is just the manifestation of the Divine attributes. In maintaining and promoting His work in the Church, the attributes or perfections of Jehovah are wonderfully and gloriously displayed. What a manifestation does this afford of His *love*! No work that He performs for her, or blessing He confers on her, but is the fruit of His eternal and unchangeable love; and when we consider how undeserving she is of His love, and especially the channel of the Divine Redeemer's blood, through which it flows down from heaven to her, may we not well exclaim, in the language of His own Word, "Behold what manner of love!" In building up Zion, He appears also in the glory of His infinite *faithfulness*; for all His interpositions in her behalf are the fulfilment of His promises, first to Christ in the new Covenant, and to herself in the gospel of His grace. But how glorious does His faithfulness, in the building up of her, appear! In every respect in which He promises to promote her interests, He makes His faithfulness and truth to her seen. Zion may sometimes think that He is forgetting His promises, and exclaim, Hath He forgotten to be gracious! Will He be favourable no more! But there is no ground for such doubts of Him; He will interpose for her in His own time. Men often break their promises to their friends, but God never. His *power* is His *glory*; but how wonderfully often, in His building up of Zion, does this appear! He brought her out of

Egypt, and through the wilderness, and into her promised inheritance, with a strong hand and stretched out arm; and in millennial days she shall have to sing of His power, exclaiming, with joy and wonder, Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. His *wisdom* is His glory; but in promoting Zion's interests, how signally does He make his wisdom appear! He always employs the best means for building her up, and thwarts the deepest schemes of her enemies to overthrow her. By His wisdom He makes all things work together for her good. His *holiness* and *justice* are His glory. He is particularly glorious in holiness. But the glory of His holiness and justice appear strikingly in His building up of Zion. He always does so in such a manner as to display His opposition to sin. His *sovereignty*, in a word, is His glory. But this, in like manner, He shows in all His gracious actions towards His Church and people. He has mercy because He will have mercy, and compassion because He will have compassion. He is sovereign as to the time, and the manner, and the degree, and all the circumstances in which He builds His beloved Zion up.

2. The manifestation of His glory is Jehovah's supreme object in the building up of Zion. He has specially in view, in this divine and blessed work, the *salvation* of perishing souls. He erected Zion at first, and preserves her in the world, and builds her up when her walls are broken down, and maintains a dispensation of gospel ordinances in her, that guilty and ruined sinners may be restored to His favour, escape from the wrath to come, and enjoy eternal life. Her enlargement and extension to all lands will be to enlighten those sitting in darkness, and bring them to Christ and to heaven. But the salvation of sinners is an end subordinate to that of Jehovah's own *glory*. His glory is His last end, or ultimate and supreme object, in all that He does either in heaven or in earth. The Lord, we are told, accordingly, made all things for himself. He saves us, indeed, that we may glorify His name. We are not our own, but bought with a price, that we may glorify Him in our bodies and our spirits, which are His. Our chief end is, first to glorify Him, and then to enjoy Him. It is because Jehovah's supreme end, in the building up of Zion, is His glory, that we are concerned, not merely about the salvation of our souls, but also about the maintenance of His truth and cause.

3. We shall make just another remark, and bring our paper to a close, namely, that the manifestations which God gives of His glory, in maintaining and building up Zion, ought by the Church to be not only observed, but carefully kept in remembrance. The passage, while it refers to the building up of Zion, takes particular notice of the glory in which the Lord, when He came to build her, would appear; and the language implies that, for the benefit of the Church, as well as for the honour of God himself, this glory would not be forgotten. The Church should record God's interpositions for her, celebrating His grace, and power, and wisdom, and faithfulness, and other perfections displayed in them; not only for her own encouragement and edification, but for the benefit of ages to come. Hence the Church's language in another of the Psalms, "The Lord hath done great things for us," and many similar statements throughout

the divine word. This recording of God's mighty works, and acknowledging and remembering the *glory* of His perfections that appears in them, is what we call the historical testimony of the Church, and ought not to be omitted, but carefully attended to, for the promoting of both God's honour and the Church's interests.

THE PRESENT POSITION AND APPROPRIATE SPHERE OF RELIGIOUS PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

IN modern times the printing-press has become the second power in the State, and, if not wisely directed, will soon assume absolute ascendancy. In soliciting attention to this method of communicating knowledge, it is not our design to institute any comparison between the power of the pulpit and that of the press in moulding the character of the community. The former is a divine institution, which has proved its power by revolutionising the world ere the latter had come into existence, and which is yet destined to bring the entire human family into subjection to Christ. The printing-press is a providential instrumentality, placed in the hands of men for the transmission and diffusion of knowledge. Rightly employed, its beneficial results can scarcely be over-estimated; but perverted, its power for evil is commensurate with its power for good. Between the pulpit and the press there can be no legitimate comparison, and, properly employed, there can be no competition. The press ought ever to be viewed as auxiliary to the pulpit, and ought to be vigorously employed in the defence of truth and the diffusion of knowledge. The pulpit can only reach those who place themselves under its teaching, while, through the press, the Church may, and ought to furnish wholesome mental food for the entire community.

In this respect, it appears that "the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light." The press is no longer viewed as a moral power for good, but as a thing of merchandise for the acquisition of wealth. The Church has, to a great extent, relinquished her grasp of the press, and the Christian community has been guided in its support by price, rather than by truth and purity. As matters stand, the world is providing mental food for the Church, whereas the Church ought to be providing wholesome nutriment for the entire community. Instead of pervading the masses through the aid of the press, the Church has been found following in the rear, to contemplate and deal with that mass of immorality which a venal literature has helped to produce. While the Church was slumbering, the enemy has been scattering broadcast his tares by the aid of the press; consequently, the field of Christendom presents a mingled mass of truth and error, of virtuous principle and glaring immorality, of genuine piety and withering infidelity.

The danger is increased, by the tendency of the age, to undervalue the ministrations of the pulpit, and to exalt the power of the

press. In proof of this, it is only necessary to refer to the liberality with which the press is patronized, compared with that reluctant support which is tendered for the maintenance of the pulpit. It is not denied that there is now a more extensive circulation of religious literature than there has been at any former period; but we hesitate not to affirm, that at no former time has there been so great a disproportion between the number of those periodicals which are beneficial and those which are positively dangerous to the best interests of man and of society. It would be easy to present statistics of our periodical literature, showing that the annual majority issued on the side of infidelity and licentiousness amounts to ten or eleven millions. We believe that Christian men would stand aghast did they only know the extent to which the fatal poison is infecting the body politic. And yet, strange to say, this evil is scarcely noticed, much less judicially condemned by either Church or State. Some feeble efforts have been made, by legislative enactment, to secure unadulterated food for the community; but little has recently been done in order to prevent the manufacture and circulation of the most deleterious and soul-destructive mental poison, in the shape of infidel and immoral publications. We hold, in the fullest sense, the doctrine of the freedom of the press; but, in the same sense, and with the same limitations as we hold the doctrine of free trade, which provides not for the universal sale of poisons, nor the adulteration of goods. As the general community cannot distinguish between wholesome medicines and destructive poisons, the latter are restricted, and their vendors held responsible. So ought it to be in regard to books, until the community shall be able to distinguish between good and evil. The utmost extent of genuine liberty can give no man the right of presenting immorality to the public eye, nor of circulating soul-poison among the community for gain. The safety of society, as much as of individuals, demands that there should be some restrictions upon a licentious and demoralizing press; otherwise, the sordid love of gain will pander to the depraved appetite, until the foundations of the domestic and social fabric are completely mined. A demoralizing press is the certain forerunner of demoralizing revolutions, which, in their turn, give rise to military despotisms, which hesitate not to restrain its liberty in regard to the advocacy of that which is beneficial to the interests of humanity. From this, it is evident that the continuous freedom of the press demands that that freedom should be exercised within legitimate bounds, else it will produce despotisms, by which all civil and religious liberty is extinguished.

The purity of the press is a matter in which Christianity has a direct interest—a matter to which the Church requires to pay special attention. In the present day, we find the Church boasting of the power of the press, while there seems little idea that a large proportion of the press is directly antagonistic to all her efforts for the best interests of man. As matters stand, how comparatively little of our periodical literature is under the direction or control of the Church? There may be here and there a struggling magazine in connection with some special section of the Church, which is found, in most cases,

but partially supported either by ministerial contributions to its literature, or by subscriptions on the part of the members. How very few, even of those emanating from churches, are found regulated by a sole regard to divine truth and Christian principle! But even were all those which may be esteemed ecclesiastical periodicals such as could be desired, yet what are they among so many but as the drop of the bucket to the rolling tide of a speculative and venal literature. One of the special dangers of this mammon-worshipping age is the prostitution of the press for the sake of gain. Nor is the Church, in a literary point of view, free from its influence indirectly imparted. The question is not so much, what is true in religion, in philosophy, in political science, in morality, as what will yield the largest pecuniary return. The topics selected, the writers employed, and the moral tone of our periodical literature, are regulated solely with a view to the widest circulation, and the greatest amount of profit. The marketable value being ruled by the demand, every effort is made to pander to the popular taste, however much depraved. Nay, the most brilliant talents are enlisted to vitiate the public taste, so as to secure an increased and permanent circulation. Nor is this all—the double-distilled poison of infidelity is so mingled with philosophy and religion, that the bitterness of the draught is unperceived. Alas, that an instrument so powerful should be reduced to a position of mere mercantile value, irrespective of its moral effects upon the reading community! How lamentable that such an amount of mental power should be worse than wasted, in catering for the depraved appetite, while inexhaustible stores of truth and knowledge remain unexplored! But seeing that such is the case, the Church is not only called upon to bear testimony against this literary enormity, but also to supply more liberally that mental food which may, and ought to supplant a debasing literature. The mental craving is in itself beneficial, but the Church must be ready to satiate that desire which the freedom of the press has awakened.

But the opposite of this is the experience of modern times. Instead of wielding more vigorously the power of the press, so as to meet the wants of the age, the Church seems disposed to transfer the power of the press to the world without, and to seek her own literature through this corrupting channel. The separation between the Church, in her ecclesiastical capacity, and sacred literature, is becoming wider and more apparent. It would seem, to a casual observer, that an entire divorce is not far distant. The religious aspect is maintained, while the spirit is merely a worldly spirit. The religious press is not unfrequently perverted for gain, and may, as thus separated from the Church, be turned at any time against the interests of truth. That which the King of Zion designs ultimately for the diffusion of His gospel, and the defence of His cause, may thus be turned, by satanic craft, to the erection of barriers against its extension.

In referring to our religious periodical literature, we not merely insinuate that it is, in general, incidentally losing its spiritual tone, but that it is positively perverted, under the influence of mercantile competition, for gain. In cases not a few is the truth so diluted,

that it tends to weaken rather than to invigorate Christian principle. In other cases, the efforts of genius are expended in excavating some theological novelty, or pursuing some theoretical fancy. Nor are there cases wanting among our most popular religious periodicals, in which the earnest inquirer is introduced to some gorgeous picture-gallery of the human imagination, rather than to the sacred repository of divine truth. By this means, the feelings are excited by the coruscations of human genius, rather than the judgment enlightened by the sublime and substantial doctrines of the gospel. The Bible is the only solid basis of religious literature, which requires, as much as the ministrations of the pulpit, to be guided by its unerring principles. The teaching of the pulpit and the press must emanate from the same source, and, in all that pertains to vital religion, must appeal to the same standard; while the former ought unquestionably to mould and vitalize the latter. Within the Church, and not beyond it, ought Christian men to seek and find this sacred literature.

The *mode* of issuing many of our religious periodicals is objectionable, as well as the admixture of their matter. The covetous spirit of this mammon-worshipping age has nearly obliterated the line of demarcation between the sacred and the common. The encroachment upon the Sabbath by traffic has been accompanied by a similar encroachment upon sacred literature by modern advertising. The former has been loudly declaimed against by the Christian community, while the latter has hitherto escaped without a reflection. The process has been gradual. At first the advertisements consisted of catalogues of books,—now general merchandise and quack medicines are largely inserted. The more extensive the circulation of a religious periodical, the greater is the inducement to bold and hollow speculators, and, consequently, the greater temptation to Christian readers, to profane the Sabbath. Why should our religious periodicals be converted into advertising-sheets, while newspapers, and other legitimate channels, are to be had in abundance? Even those periodicals which are for Sabbath reading, are now generally found enveloped in a mass of mercantile matter, better adapted to the bill of a public auctioneer than the introduction to a religious periodical. Books of a religious stamp may be legitimately noticed, as a guide to the general reader, but advertising of all kinds is highly questionable. The sight of prices, and publishers, and authors, is calculated to awaken—nay, designed to awaken—the idea of purchase. The advertising of general merchandise in religious periodicals is utterly objectionable. It is somewhat akin to the obsolete practice of “calling rouns” at the door of the church while the people were being dismissed from public worship. Let the Christian community lift its voice against the practice, and then the temple of sacred literature shall be cleared of the buyers and sellers, as the temple of God at Jerusalem once was of the merchandise and money-changers, by their exclusion from its sacred precincts.

It is not with a view to the exposure of this or kindred evils only that we have introduced the subject of the press. There are evils lying deeper than the cover of our religious periodicals which require an immediate remedy. The subject-matter, as well as the form, has

become too much a thing of mercantile speculation. Our religious literature has been, to a large extent, transferred to the hands of speculative vendors. These have no doubt sought their contributors within the Church; but, in doing so, they have been guided by the prospects of pecuniary profit. They have cherished and drawn upon those who were prepared to wield a mercenary pen. The primary object being personal profit, the whole machinery has been thrown into a mercenary mould. The Church has not sufficiently calculated the power of the press, neither has she employed it as she ought for the illumination of the masses. It is not meant that the Church should become a speculator in literature, nor is it desirable that at any time she should be authorised to fix the limits of religious publication. The *Index Expurgatorius* is the invention of Popery, and let it thus remain, as the monument of spiritual despotism; but what we plead for is, that the Church of Christ is bound to employ the printing-press in the defence and diffusion of the gospel. The power of the press has been granted in this latter day as auxiliary to the pulpit, consequently the Church is bound to use it to the full extent of her capability. She is not warranted to transfer this power to any other party, nor is she calmly to look on while the world is forestalling her with that instrumentality which is designed for her special use. It is the Church's province to provide liberally for the mental sustenance of the entire community. We hesitate not to say that she ought to have her printing-presses and scribes under her own control, as really as the Jewish Church had her sacred penman and literary transcribers. When God transmitted the ecclesiastical history of his ancient Church, he communicated it by those within her pale. When he gave the civil history of the Jews, or of other nations, it was recorded by the same writers, and interwoven with the history of the Church. Why, then, should the record of God's providential dispensations with nominally Christian nations, be left to the pen of an infidel or an atheist, who discards the very idea of the divine government as interfering with or regulating the affairs of men? Why should the rising youth in the Church receive their ideas of God's dealings with the ancient Roman Empire only through the mind of a Gibbon? Or why should British youths learn the history of these divinely-favoured kingdoms only through the distorted views of a Hume or a Macaulay? The Bible student alone finds a solid stand-point from which to scan the character of man and the events of nations. He alone can recognize the embodiment of moral principle in the one, and the relations of the other to the moral government of God; consequently, He alone can properly delineate the instrument, or characterize the event. We might apply these remarks to every other department of knowledge, and show that science and philosophy—that history and poetry—that, in fact, every species of knowledge, can only reach its apex, and diffuse its blessings, when baptized with the spirit of Christianity. Why, then, should not the Church embrace within her pale, and make provision for those students of nature, of providence, and of redemption, who might record the wonders of Jehovah, and enlist the sympathies of our common humanity?

We are aware that the idea of gospel ministers being concerned with authorship is foreign to the views of many, both clerical and lay, in this as in former ages. There are not a few who seem to be utterly afraid of literary ministers, and who fail not to express their conviction that such should restrict themselves to their special work, leaving the "making of books" and the editing of periodicals to those who have nothing else to do. Let this principle be carried out, and it will be apparent that the greater proportion of our past and present religious literature would never have had a place in the Church or the world. If it is improper for one gospel minister to write books *because he is a minister*, then it is equally improper for all gospel ministers to spend any portion of their time in authorship. Had this principle been carried out since the invention of printing, not to speak of the primitive Church, the most distinguished Reformers would have gone down to the grave without a written record of the testimony which they lifted up, and the exposition of the truths which they preached and defined. The history of the Reformation itself, and of the martyr period of persecution, must have been written by the world; for most of those records which have come down to us are from the pens of gospel ministers. Had ministers not written, we would not have possessed at the present day a Bible-commentary worthy of the name. The learning of Luther, and Calvin, and Melancthon, and their contemporary Reformers, should have perished with them. The theology of Owen, and Boston, and Henry, and Scott, would have directly affected only those to whom they preached the gospel. The position of the existing Churches, in relation to the Reformation Church, would be a hazy problem that no living mind could solve; aye, and Knox, the Scottish Reformer, with all his writings, would at this day have been under the gloomy shadow suspended by Jacobite historians, and the researches of our own M'Crie, if ever made, must have perished with him. This would have been the native result had gospel ministers never become authors; and this, we venture to predict, will be the case in future, should they cease to enter the walks of literature.

But we venture farther in this line of argument, and hesitate not to affirm that, had the Church collectively extended and transmitted her literature as she might have done, and had she seized upon, and Christianized the sciences in their rise and progress, she would not at the present day have been menaced by infidelity on the one hand, and Popery on the other; neither would she have been wailing over the ignorance of the home-heathen masses in our towns and cities. It is because ministers have written so little, and mere men of the world so much, that our literature has become so deleterious to the mass of the reading community. It is their province to write in exposition of the gospel and defence of the truth; and why should the fruits of their labours be confined to the range of their living voice? If God bestows the gift suitable for authorship, we maintain that, other matters being equal, they are, of all men, placed in the most favourable circumstances for communicating or transmitting the most valuable knowledge. We admit that, as matters stand—over-burdened with ministerial labour, and shut out by poverty from the richer stores of

literature—they are generally placed in circumstances in which it requires a species of moral heroism to issue anything beyond a pamphlet or an anonymous paper in a periodical. But this is the fault of the Church, which has made no provision for the extension, or even transmission, of her own religious literature. Hence the world is invading her territory, and drawing thousands from her pale. Hence she is called upon to contend with the ignorance and immorality which her neglect has tended to produce. Had the Church of the Reformation, or even the Church of the Secession, possessed the spirit and enterprise of our own Professor Bruce of former times, who, single-handed, brought the printing-press to his study at Whitburn, could matters have been as they are, either in regard to a testimony for truth, or a general acquaintance with the gospel plan of salvation? But, alas, the Church has withheld the means. Gospel ministers have been overladen, literature has been neglected, the world has supplanted the Church, and souls are being ruined in millions by an infidel and debasing pecuniary press. Such being the case, let no section of the witnessing Church, however small, neglect the gifts that are within her, nor the means of defence with which God has furnished her. Though she may not be able to command the popular ear, nor obtain the large circulation accorded to mercenary publications, she may be blessed, as she has already been, in defending truth, and transmitting to future generations contributions in theology and history, which shall obtain a place, and perpetuate a beneficial influence, when millions of ephemeral productions shall have sunk into oblivion, except in so far as their poison is affecting public morality, and their bitter fruits are recorded in the doom of lost souls. Let ministers and people come forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Though all may not feel called upon to write, all ought to feel bound to countenance and support those who, according to the best of their ability, are maintaining and diffusing the “word of Christ’s patience.” The matter is not personal, but public and ecclesiastical. Were each professed witness for Christ feeling an interest, and rendering pecuniary or literary aid, there might even yet be a much more general circulation of those special works and periodicals which have for their aim the revival of the Covenanted Reformation.

COMMON INVESTMENT, WITH SURE RETURNS.

THE type of a class may be obtained from the casual expression of an individual. The ruling motives and principles of action may be gathered from incidental statements made by the actors. Action and language are alike the embodiment of thought. The latter, if free and casual, is as really the index of the mind as the former; “for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” In guarded moments, a man may dissemble, and may, by the expression of his sentiments, appear very different from what he really is; but off his guard, in the free and easy intercourse of life, he will speak as he feels,

and act as he thinks. The expression of a solitary sentiment may furnish the close observer of human nature with the key which unlocks all the motives and principles of action.

These thoughts have been suggested by the casual conversation of two fellow-travellers in a railway carriage. During a journey of less than seven miles, many State questions were discussed and settled to the satisfaction of the parties. The wisdom and eloquence employed in this department have left no abiding impression. Seven years' labour of the British Parliament could scarcely suffice to rectify all that was supposed to be wrong in social life, which these two wise-acres settled in less than the same number of miles of a railway journey. Had they stopped short with politics, or had the journey terminated with the conclusion of this political discussion, it might have sunk into oblivion in the mind of the writer, as thousands of such discussions do daily in the whirlpool of mercantile intercourse. But another, a collateral subject was introduced, which, though very limited in its discussion, has left permanent impressions. The subject was success in life; and the principle enunciated was the following:—*"If a man invests both soul and body in making money, there is nothing to hinder him to get on."* Such was the sage dictum of one who could guide a whole cabinet, in his own estimation, but who seemed forgetful that his own principle of success strikes at the very root of social existence, and of justice between man and man. The sentence, however, is pregnant with meaning, and truly represents a large proportion of the commercial spirit of the age. Never did a casual expression define more fully the principles which are embodied in systematic fraud; nor is it less appropriate, as applicable to that worldly spirit of the present age, which, under the mask of diligence in business, conceals that "covetousness which is idolatry." The above sentence might be recorded as the first article in the creed of the worshippers of mammon. Nothing could express self-devotement more explicit. Nothing could indicate homage more free or more comprehensive. The worship tendered to the golden calf by the infatuated Israelites was not more really idolatry, nor more offensive to God, than the homage which thousands, bearing the Christian name, render to the literal gold, when thus investing soul and body for the explicit purpose of making money.

The term invest, or investment, has reference, in mercantile language, to the sum of money embarked in trade, or put out at interest, or sunk in property, from which the owner expects a corresponding present or prospective return. Merchants speak of a good or bad investment in proportion to the amount of the returns expected or the risk incurred. Competence or penury, wealth or poverty, is the natural consequence of such investments. If the investment should prove profitable and safe, riches will accumulate; if unprofitable and unsafe, both the capital invested, and the returns anticipated, may be finally and for ever lost. And even thus it is in the case of "investment" under consideration. In ordinary cases, the merchant may invest only his spare capital, which, though it may be lost, will not entail immediate ruin; but here it is the entire capital which, being

invested, is ever at stake, and which, being a false investment, must entail immediate ruin. Nay, more; the capital invested by the worshipper of mammon is not his own, but capital received in loan, for which he must at length give account to God. But what is this capital proposed to be invested? "The Soul and the Body!" The whole man, created by God, and for God. The soul! a living, thinking, spiritual substance, which emanates from God, and which must return to God—the soul! made originally in the image of God, and capable, in the hand of the Spirit, of being restored to that image—the soul! capable of exercising mental and moral faculties and powers, and of rising higher and higher in the scale of intelligence among the most exalted creatures—the soul! of such intrinsic value, that nothing less than the blood of Christ could purchase its redemption—the soul! capable of knowing, loving, serving, and enjoying God. Yes, the soul! destined to live for ever to realize an eternity of existence. This is part of the capital to be invested *for making money*. But it is not all. The "body," too, must be sunk in the dread investment. The body is the instrument by which the soul works in the pursuit of gain; hence it must be subjected to a life of grinding toil, in order that at some future period it may be gorgeously apparelled or sumptuously fed. As the soul is the mystery of the spiritual world among creatures, so the body of man is the mystery of the material world. The human frame is indeed "fearfully and wonderfully made." What physical capabilities—what special adaptations—what nervous sensibilities—what mechanical powers—what restorative organs—what living energies—does the human system exhibit! Yet all these, and these in living union with an immortal soul, must be invested in the avaricious mart of covetousness, for the sake of realizing—yea, for the uncertain prospect of acquiring—a little of this world's gain. Was ever reason so debased? Were ever intellectual powers so thoroughly prostituted? Is the constitution of man a mystery? This self-prostitution of man's nature is a mystery greater still. By "the investment of soul and body for making money," the noblest work of God on earth is self-degraded for the meanest object, and self-debated to the lowest position.

To speak of investing soul and body for the purpose of making money, is to reduce them to the same category as the mineral gold or silver dug from the bowels of the earth. It is to place humanity, with its purely constituted frame, propelled by a living spirit, among the machinery by which the raw material of earth's produce is converted into fabrics necessary for the comfort of the human species. It is worse, being voluntary, than that system of slavery which reduces humanity to the category of chattel-property. Yea; it reduces all who make such investment to a position lower than the degraded slave-master. He professes personal freedom, while binding the yoke upon a brother. He reduces the dark African to a place among his cattle or his machinery, while the covetous wretch, who invests soul and body for making money, enslaves himself for the sake of gain; yea, he invests his own soul and his own body in the "public stocks" of avarice, with a view to the acquirement of prospective wealth. Such

return to the man who invests soul and body for the acquisition of wealth. There is a present return of anxiety and care—of labour and sorrow; while there is a prospective return—the entire stock, soul and body, with the entire accumulations of fraud and crime, ensuring the reward of inexpressible, eternal misery. True it is that many lose both worlds—the world that is by cupidity, and the world that is to come by serving mammon rather than God. The case of such is vividly portrayed in the book of Ecclesiastes. "There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither, saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity; yea, it is a sore travail." Were there nothing more than this present return of sore travail, it would be of less importance; but there is a day of final reckoning, when the Judge of all the earth shall erect his great white throne, and open his books, and render to every man according to his works. Then will be seen the absolute folly of investing soul and body for the making of money. Then will be understood the question of him who is Lord over all, as put while on earth. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

But the statement already referred to runs counter to man's primary obligations, and is in opposition to the moral government of God and the dictates of the Divine word. It is true that God has so arranged the plans of his providence, that the present reward usually accompanies many persevering efforts,—as "that the hand of the diligent maketh rich;" but even here there is no infringement upon the absolute sovereignty of God. The idea that "there is nothing to hinder the man to get on, who invests soul and body for making money," excludes the sovereign dominion of Jehovah in his own world. It is also opposed to the experience of past generations. The testimony of the Spirit, by Solomon, is—"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase. There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. But those riches perish by evil travail; and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand. As he came forth from his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour which he may carry away in his hand. And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go; and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?" Let the worldling, ready to invest both soul and body for making money, look calmly at the picture of the present return, and at the still more appalling picture of eternal perdition, as the reward of the unprofitable servant. By such a view, the avaricious soul may be held in check, and the most diligent in their legitimate callings be deterred from cherishing that covetousness which, in the sight of God, is idolatry.

To the man who invests soul and body in pursuit of the world, God sometimes grants the present attainment of his object. "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like the green bay tree." But what is his future history? "Yet he passed away, and lo,

he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." The parable of our Lord lifts the veil, which in the Psalm is drawn over the future prospect of the worldling. "The rich man also died and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." Where, then, is the profit by such an investment? What will it avail a man to say, I got a good situation—I pushed hard a lucrative business, but I lost my soul! I found the world's friendship, but God is my enemy! I got wealth, but with it the loss of eternal life! I clothed my body richly, and satiated my soul with worldly pleasures, but now the cup of eternal wrath is my portion! The folly of all who invest soul and body in making money is graphically described in our Lord's parable of the worldly rich man. His wealth increased abundantly. The produce of his fields had overgrown the capacities of his barns and storehouses. He designed to enlarge them—to fill them—to riot upon their contents. He promised himself a long life of idleness, luxury, and mirth. "But God said to him, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" Here, then, had been an investment; but here, then, was also a day of reckoning. While the day-dream of imaginary pleasure was gilding the path of hope, death was at the door. Little did he think, while flattering himself with the prospect of many years of carnal enjoyment, that, the next hour, covetous friends would be scrambling for his estate, crawling worms for his body, and tormenting devils for his soul.

But while it is thus with the man who invests body and soul for the making of money, there is another species of investment, adapted to man's moral nature, and compatible with his best interests. It is unnecessary to say to the reader of the Bible that we refer to the surrender of the soul and body to God, and the devotement of all our energies to his service. "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever." "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." In this investment, there is full scope for all the faculties and powers of the immortal nature. Here there is a present reward, and the sure prospect of eternal felicity. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." The men of the world will not believe this, and therefore they barter their souls for the prospect of gain; and also, there are not a few in the Church who are yielding to the spirit of the age, and who, though they would not venture to speak of investing soul and body for the acquisition of wealth, are yet ready to make a compromise between God and the world. It is soon found of such, that inordinate diligence in business overlays "fervour of spirit," while the service of God must yield to the claims of the world. How necessary for those who are encircled with the whirlpool of covetousness, or who are in danger of being sucked into the rapids of that mercantile current, which is bearing society on its bosom over the giddy heights of commercial destruction, to reflect that the falling crash of the bankrupt is but child's play to the consternation of the worldling's departed spirit,

and the cheerless prison of the debtor is but a faint emblem of the pit of woe. Remember, ye worldlings, that "the end of these things is death."

What a contrast to this is furnished by the life and death of the child of God! "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your bodies, and in your spirits, which are God's." This is present duty, and it is connected with a present and prospective reward. "In the keeping of God's commandments there is a great reward," even in this world, and a reward hereafter, which will satisfy the most enlarged conception and desires of the soul. "For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give *grace and glory*; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." The inventory of the saint outsteps the united treasures of all the worldlings which this earth has favoured. "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

THE ORGAN JUDICIALLY TOLERATED BY THE ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

It is with feelings of deep alarm and sincere regret that we mark the progress of innovation upon the simplicity and purity of Presbyterian worship. Though hushed for a season in the United Presbyterian Church, the introduction of the organ is a fact accomplished within the pale of the Free Presbyterian Church in England. Nor is it merely introduced upon the responsibility of individual congregations; it has received the judicial toleration of the Synod at its recent annual meeting, held in John Knox Church, Newcastle. For some time past, the question of instrumental music, in the worship of God, has been raised in the courts of that Church, supreme and subordinate. Two congregations in the Presbytery of Lancashire had introduced the organ; and this Presbytery had, by a numerous majority, formally tolerated its use. The matter, being carried to the supreme court, was fully discussed and adjudicated upon last year. The Synod's deliverance was adverse to the use of the organ in public worship; and it might have been reasonably supposed that each session and congregation in connection with the Synod would have yielded implicit obedience to the mandate of the supreme court. That such has not been the case appears from the proceedings of last meeting of Synod. We have felt it necessary to refer to these facts, in noticing the recent decision, because it appears, from this and other cases which may hereafter be noticed, that direct rebellion or threatened disruption is sufficient to stifle discussion, or procure expediency-measures in regard to matters deeply affecting the constitution of the Church and the purity of public worship.

As far as appears from the abridged report of Synodical proceedings in the *Scottish Guardian* of April 28, the organ question came up "by

reference and dissents relative to the retention of an organ in St George's Church, Liverpool, contrary to the decision of Synod anent the use of instrumental music." It appears that this congregation had retained the organ in disregard of the deliverance of the supreme court—an act which in itself assumes the aspect of contumacy, or direct rebellion against the authority of the highest court of appeal. This being the case, and considering that, so recently as last year, the Synod had fully discussed the general subject, and had come to a deliverance "anent the use of instrumental music," it might have been naturally supposed, that not only would the organ have been forthwith silenced, but also that the minister, session, and congregation would have been judicially dealt with for such a gross act of disobedience. But, *mirable dictu*, without even a reflection upon the act of rebellion, the majority of Synod judicially permits, or rather formally sanctions, the continued use of the organ in St George's; and, as it would appear, by an act of grace, extend their shield over its contemporary in St John's, Warrington, whose case was not immediately before them.

In a case so grave, involving direct rebellion against the authority of the supreme court, and that in a matter directly in view when the deliverance of Synod had been given, it might be supposed that some strong reasons would be adduced by dissentients, in order to show that the deliverance of Synod was in opposition to the revealed will of God, and, consequently, infringing upon the consciences of those by whom it had been disregarded. But nothing of the kind appears in the defence. Musical taste, supposed advantage, former use of instruments, alleged disregard of the Barrier Act, and such like reasons, are all that is urged for the retention of the organ; and these, accompanied by a threat from the chief aggressor, to the effect, "that if they were not allowed to use the organ, he saw nothing but the complete dismemberment of the Church."

In the face of such reasons in defence of such an act, it might have been naturally supposed that the Synod would have reaffirmed its decision of last year, and have proceeded to deal with the parties by whom it had been disregarded. This, we presume, would have been the only course consistent with the dignity of a court of Christ, in relation to a question affecting the purity of His worship. But, alas! present duty is constrained to yield to prospective consequences, and rebellion itself receives an implicit sanction. Three motions were made, and formally put to the court; only one of which was worthy of such a position, though supported by a small minority. The other two merit a place in the archives of literature, as specimens of the expediency-principle, now so commonly embodied in ecclesiastical decisions, in relation to matters affecting the constitution of the Church and the purity of public worship.

Rev. William Chalmers rose to propose the following motion:—

"Dismiss the reference; find that the use of instrumental music in public worship, though not without precedent, is not in accordance with the ordinary practice of this Church, and ought not to be introduced in any case, without the permission craved and obtained of the supreme court; and enjoin Presbyteries to take order accord-

ingly. But with regard to the cases of St John's Warrington, and St George's Liverpool, inasmuch as instrumental music had been introduced into them by the sanction, express or implied, of the Presbytery of Lancashire, and is agreeable to the feelings and wishes of said congregations, while its prohibition would disturb their peace, destroy their prosperity, and endanger their very existence, the Synod instruct the Presbytery of Lancashire to take no further action in regard to them, and renew its injunctions to all Presbyteries to take steps, as far as practicable, to encourage and cultivate the harmonious exercise of vocal praise."

Rev. Thomas Duncan, of Newcastle, proposed the following amendment :—

"The Synod, having heard the statement of the reference, and the relative dissents, agree to maintain the declarative deliverance regarding the use of instrumental music in public worship, as having respect to all the congregations within its bounds; dismiss the dissents and complaints; and enjoin the Presbytery to take order that instruments shall forthwith cease in St George's, Liverpool, and St John's, Warrington."

The Clerk of Synod also moved as follows :—

"Sustain the reference; find that the Session of St George's, Liverpool, ought to have received the Presbytery's Committee appointed to confer with them, and to have deferred to the Presbytery's brotherly desire to reason and remonstrate with them on the use of an organ in public worship, and that they are answerable for having failed to do so; find that an organ was used in St John's, Warrington, at the time when it was received into this Church, and that an organ was introduced into St George's, Liverpool, in 1853, with the consent and sanction of the Presbytery of Lancashire; and the Synod declare that such use is not approved by this Church. But in consideration of the peculiarities and specialties of these cases, which render them exceptional, and incapable of being hereafter precedents, authorize the Presbytery of Lancashire to forbear further proceedings *in hoc statu* for silencing the instruments now in use in their congregations; desire the Presbytery, and all other Presbyteries of this Church, carefully to obtemper the findings of last Synod on the introduction of instruments in the public worship of God; and further, to take notice that on no pretence such instruments be elsewhere sanctioned in the public worship of God."

We have, at the expense of space, given these motions in full, as an act of justice to the parties, and as the best exponent of the views and feelings which pervade the English Presbyterian Synod. It will be seen at a glance that the second is the only one that meets the case, or that is consistent with the previous deliverance of the Synod. But, strange to say, when put against the third, it found only thirty-eight supporters, opposed by sixty-seven. And, again, when this third motion was put against the first, the first was carried by a majority of four, the numbers being fifty-three against forty-nine. We are glad to find that the Rev. Thomas Duncan begged to enter the protest and dissent of himself and all those who agreed with him against the vote, and that, though not without considerable discussion, these dissents were received. Such a termination of such a case is ominous as regards English Presbyterianism, and, though distant, should be marked as the note of warning to those churches which are threatened with like innovations in Presbyterian Scotland.

The deliverance of the English Presbyterian Synod is remarkable for its generality, inconsistency, and timidity. There is a reference before the court anent the retention of an organ in St George's Church, Liverpool, contrary to the decision of the Synod, with accompanying dissents. The Synod agrees to "dismiss the reference" without a

judgment upon its merits, and without any vindication of the Synod's authority; thus, as far as it appears, conniving at the disregard of its own decision by a minister and congregation. Next, the Synod finds "that the use of instrumental music in the public worship of God, though not without precedent, is not in accordance with the ordinary practice of this Church." It is not said where the precedent is found, though to every student of history it is clear as noonday that, under the New Testament economy, its introduction and use dates from the apostacy of the Christian Church, and is associated with the sensuous rites of Popery. But how cautious is the accompanying phrase!—"that it is not in accordance with the *ordinary practice* of this Church." It might have been safely stated that it was not in accordance with the decision of the Synod; but that decision is kept out of view, and the *ordinary practice* of the Church is substituted in its place. Is it to be understood that there is "*ordinary*" and *extra-ordinary practice* in the matters of public worship within the same Church? a Church, moreover, the recognized standards of which bind to union and uniformity in worship, as well as in doctrine and government; and at entrance to office in which every elder and deacon pledges himself "to observe *uniformity of worship*, and of the administration of all public ordinances within this Church, as the same are at present performed and allowed;" and in which every minister at ordination comes under solemn engagements to "maintain and defend" the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith, "and *the purity of worship*, as presently practised in this Church;" and, still further, that he will follow no divisive courses from the doctrine, *worship*, discipline, and government of this Church."* There is here no such distinction as seems to be implied in the motion, which speaks of "*ordinary practice*;" and presuming that the finding of the Synod was in harmony with the standards of the Church, the way was clear to enjoin uniformity, and, consequently, to dismiss the organs which had, in violation of this uniformity, found their way into the above-named congregations; and to admonish those office-bearers who, in disregard of their ordination engagements, had connived at, or encouraged this departure from uniformity of worship.

The next part of the motion, without expressing any judgment regarding the general question of instrumental music in the public worship of God, affirms, "that it ought not to be introduced in any case without the permission craved and obtained of the supreme court." The question here is made to rest entirely upon the will of the Church, as if her power was legislative in regard to doctrine or worship, and not merely administrative. Until it be proved that instrumental music is a divinely appointed part of New Testament worship, the sanction of the Synod, yea, of the General Assembly itself, cannot warrant its introduction. The form of such a motion is calculated to lead ministers and members to suppose that they require only to agree to such a change, and then it may be universally adopted. Was it not by such admissions, and such exercise of the human will, without regard to the Divine will revealed, that the whole system of Popery

* Formula—Free Church Standards, pages 462, 463.

has been built up, and that the system of Prelacy has been sustained in its ritual ceremonies and services? The enunciation of such principles, in the formal deliverances of Presbyterian Church courts, proclaims our danger, and clearly indicates the course of those undercurrents by which the surface of ecclesiastical society is being violently moved.

The next part of this motion proves its inconsistency both with itself and with the previous deliverance of the court. "But with regard to the cases of St John's, Warrington, and St George's, Liverpool, inasmuch as instrumental music had been introduced by the sanction, express or implied, of the Presbytery of Lancashire, and is agreeable to the feelings and wishes of said congregations, while its prohibition would disturb their peace, destroy their prosperity, and endanger their very existence, the Synod," &c. What strange reasoning in relation to matters the most important!—a matter affecting the manner and spirit of the worship of God. The Presbytery of Lancashire has sanctioned instrumental music, though opposed to the "ordinary practice" of the Church and the declarative act of the Synod—*ergo*, the Synod must endorse the sanction of the Presbytery! The use of the organ "is agreeable to the feelings and wishes of said congregations," though directly opposed to the standards of the Church and the explicit deed of Synod—*ergo*, "the Synod shall instruct the Presbytery to take no further action in regard to them!" The prohibition of the organ "would disturb their peace, destroy their prosperity, and endanger their very existence," though such prohibition is in accordance with the standards of the Church and the finding of Synod—therefore, "take no further action!" Is there anything in the whole system of Popery that might not be introduced on the same or similar grounds? The sanction of a subordinate court—the feelings and wishes of the people—the danger of disturbance—the risk of ruining external prosperity,—these are the recorded grounds of this judicial deliverance, by the English Presbyterian Synod, regarding the worship of God. Tell it not in Rome, publish it not at Oxford or Cambridge, lest the Papists rejoice, and the devotees of Puseyism triumph! Who could have supposed that the professed representatives of the Church of Knox and Henderson should have thus succumbed to popular influence, and that before the eyes of the advocates of ritual forms and ceremonies in Prelatic England? Is the spirit of Presbytery gone, that it could thus bow down to human wishes in a matter relating to the worship of God? Surely the Church of Knox must have been slumbering in the lap of Delilah ere she could have appeared thus shorn of her beauty and her strength! In former times, the Church endeavoured to ascertain the will of God, and then to urge conformity to that will upon all within her pale. Now, it would appear that she must consult "the feelings and the wishes" of this or that congregation, or the sanction of the subordinate court, and in accordance with these legislate in the matters of worship!

However much we regret the decision of the supreme court under consideration, we cannot but rejoice that reasons have been assigned for this deliverance in regard to the organ. They are certainly not

such as will recommend themselves to any reflecting mind, nor such as will be difficult to overthrow in the settlement of this question. If the mode of public worship is to be regulated simply by a regard to "the feelings and wishes" of the people, then it must change as frequently as those feelings and wishes alter. It must necessarily come to such a state as did the land of Promise in the time of the Judges, regarding which it was said, "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes." If tastes and feelings are to regulate the worship of God, and not the revealed will of God, it is difficult to see what can be prohibited on the ground of "will-worship." What becomes of the doctrine of Christ's Headship if, in the matters of worship, His authority is not to be the supreme law?

We sincerely pity those in the minority, who have been unable to ward off this fatal deliverance; but we trust that they will never rest until this foul blot has been wiped from their record, by a return to the constitutional principles and scriptural worship of the Reformed and Covenanted Church of Scotland.

We would not have protracted this paper but for the conviction that the matter is one of vital importance, and one that must soon be discussed in Presbyterian Scotland. Besides, we cannot overlook the fact that this is the Church in which our *quondam* brother, Dr M'Crie, is now one of the honoured professors. We have heard much, in other days, of the importance of having a broad platform on which to unfurl the banner of the Covenant; yet strange it is that the name of the Doctor does not appear in connection with this discussion, and stranger still, if true, that, in company with his brother professor, Mr Lorimer, he left the house as soon as the matter of reference was taken up. There must be something relaxing in the London atmosphere which affects the native vigour of Presbytery—there must be something overwhelming in the majestic tones of the organ, otherwise the seat of a pledged and covenanted witness for truth could not have been empty upon such an occasion, nor could that voice have been hushed in silence which once so nobly pled for the whole constitution, principles, and practice of the Church of Scotland, while tracing her bloody struggles for truth and liberty, in the "Historical Sketches."

CRITICAL NOTICE.

"*The Saturday Evening Concerts*" a Sin and a Snare. A Lecture delivered in Free Gorbals Church, by the Rev. Robert Bremner, M.A. Glasgow: George Gallie.

WE have perused this lecture with high gratification, and would gladly make room for copious extracts from a publication so excellent in itself, and so seasonable at the present time. But it is so full of Scripture texts and illustrations—any one of which is sufficient to condemn the evil animadverted upon—that we would find difficulty in making selections, even if our space permitted. We would take leave,

therefore, earnestly to recommend our readers to procure the publication for themselves, especially any who may have a hankering notion that the amusements referred to are such as Christians may warrantably patronize or encourage.

The lecturer takes for his foundation-text 1 Thessalonians, v. 22—"Abstain from all appearance of evil,"—maintaining throughout, however, that the Saturday Evening Concerts held in the City Hall of Glasgow, "under the auspices of the Directors of the Glasgow Abstiners' Union," have not only the appearance, but the reality of evil. We may fully take it for granted that the author correctly describes what he saw it his duty to witness for himself at these concerts; for, notwithstanding that his lecture called forth a torrent of abuse from most of the local papers, not one of them calls in question a single fact that he has stated. Taking this for granted, as we are further assured we may, from what we know of like amusements elsewhere, we say implicitly, that no Christian man, who has a right sense of what is required of him by the revealed will of God, can dispute the conclusion to which our author comes, when he asserts that these concerts are sinful in their nature and character, and injurious in their tendency and operation. At the same time, we are not surprised that the delivery and publication of this lecture should have called forth the wild newspaper denunciations of lecture and lecturer, from which the author culls some elegant extracts, as an appendix, to show the personal refinement of writers who maintain, from personal observation, the refining tendency of these concerts. The standard of refinement to which they desire to elevate the masses may be estimated from the following chain of "orient pearls, at random strung:"—"Miserable driveller," "unfortunate wretch," "pious humbug," "reverend slanderer," "modern maw-worm," "reverend defamer," "fiery rhodomontade," "coarse vandalism," "sheer cant," "fanaticism run mad." Such are some of the choice expressions applied to lecturer and lecture; and we disclaim the imputation of being uncharitable when we say, that such a mode of replying to a statement so scriptural, so faithful and true, is most naturally to be accounted for by the saying of inspiration—"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." It is often the effect of a faithful exposure of the prevailing sins of society, that those who are resolved to maintain both their Christian profession and their unchristian life, instead of removing the occasion of rebuke, fall foul of him who breaks in upon their false peace; and such is the deceitfulness of the human heart, that, instead of searching the Scriptures to see if these things are really so, and shaping their lives accordingly, they whisper peace to themselves when there is none, and endeavour to shape scripture truth to square with their preconceived delusive notions. Our favourite mode of disposing, *brevi manu*, of all such home appeals, is by loudly proclaiming the undoubted truth, that the Christian life is scripturally represented to be a life of pleasantness and peace. There is a double fallacy in this argument as so applied. In the first place, though it is in one sense the happiest life—because it is happier far than the life of the worldling or profligate,—yet it is a life which requires that we endure hardness,

that we deny ourselves, crucify the flesh, love not the world, nor the things of the world, and beware of being lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. In the second place, those who thus argue, forget, or do not understand, that the happiness of the Christian is drawn from quite a different source from that whence worldly men have their happiness, and is placed on objects altogether different. "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." "I joy'd when to the house of God, Go up, they said to me." "Rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Ah, that professed followers of Christ realized these as the enjoyments of all true believers! There would then be less hair-splitting disputation about what may and what may not be lawful on the part of Christians. We do not feel called upon to dispute the possibility of listening to, or engaging in, secular music on a Saturday evening without sin, though certainly we know of no Saturday night concerts on which we can look with complacency. But the question is much broader than this. It is not the part of the true believer to be inquiring how far he can conform to the world without actual sin, but, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" How can I best attain my chief end, the glory of God? How can I best work out my own salvation with fear and trembling? What is implied in the all-important injunction—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." Those who are more concerned to ascertain how far they may go with the mass around them, without sin, than they are to stem the torrent of abounding worldliness and ungodliness, have great reason to examine themselves whether the root of the matter is in them. It was on account of lukewarmness that the Church of Laodicea was loathed by the King of Zion; and there is nothing which retards the advancement of His kingdom upon earth more than this same lukewarmness among His professed subjects. Were the line of demarcation between the Church and the world more broadly marked, and more recognizable, men would be brought to the point of deliberately readily choosing whom they would serve; and the Church, purified and strengthened, would go forth, with the presence and blessing of the Captain of Salvation, to the conquest of the world.

It will be seen that we have not taken up, in detail, the many tests by which Saturday evening concerts are tried in Mr Bremner's pamphlet, and condemned. We confess we have no heart to enter upon a task which is so well and so thoroughly done to our hands, and which, we feel persuaded, would be, in the estimation of most of our readers, a work of supererogation. And were we to proceed further to answer the special pleading and violent oburgation—reasoning we cannot call it—by which these amusements have been defended from the masterly discussion of Mr Bremner, we should find ourselves in the position of the American senator, who excused himself from replying to the speech of an opponent by saying that it always gave him a severe wrench to kick at nothing. We would decline altogether to discuss the question on the principles of expediency, apart from a recognition of the law and the testimony as the standard of appeal; and we have not heard or seen it discussed by the friends of these entertainments on higher grounds. We may just make one

extract from the pamphlet before us, which meets most satisfactorily the argument sometimes employed—that though such amusements may not be congenial to the tastes of the renewed man, they ought to be provided for the unthinking masses, in order that they may be kept from worse occupation. Upon this point Mr Bremner says—

“It is a very common idea, that those who are unconverted are not only not required by God to act in the way in which his people are required to act, but may, without being guilty of sin, do things which those who have been born again could not do without sin; and that sights and scenes which would be injurious to believers, may be witnessed, and mingled in with impunity, by those who have not as yet passed from death unto life. Such, however, is very far from being the true state of the case. There is but one law in the Word of God for believers and for unbelievers. Whatever the former are required and bound to do, the latter are required and bound to do also. In like manner, whatever the former are prohibited from doing, the latter are also prohibited from doing. Nothing, moreover, that is hurtful, spiritually or morally, to believers, can be anything but injurious to unbelievers. So far, in fact, from the unconverted being at liberty to do what believers are not at liberty to do, or able to witness, without harm, sights and scenes, and performances, which believers could not witness without harm, it is the very reverse.

“If, therefore, these Saturday Evening Concerts are such that the people of God could not frequent them without contracting guilt and sustaining injury, much more are they such that the unconverted cannot frequent them without committing sin and receiving harm. So much is this the case, that if it would be a sad and humiliating spectacle to see the people of God crowding night after night to these concerts, as most unquestionably it would—a spectacle fitted to make angels weep and devils rejoice—much more must it be regarded as a sad and melancholy spectacle to see crowds of those who are still under a sentence of eternal condemnation, exposed to the wrath of God, and liable to be at any moment cut down and cast into hell, as all unconverted persons are, gathered together week after week in the City Hall, and giving their hearts to, and spending their time and money upon, such tomfoolery and nonsense. Anything more mournful and humiliating it is scarcely possible to conceive, unless it be the fact that the tomfooleries, buffoonery, and nonsense which the parties referred to are gathered together from week to week to witness, are not only provided for them by grave elders and members of the Church of Christ, but actually *presided over* from night to night by these same gentlemen. ‘Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.’ Very different is the way in which God, knowing the sin and guilt and danger of such unconverted persons, would have them to be employed. ‘Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men. O ye simple, understand wisdom, and, ye fools, be of an understanding heart.’ ‘Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.’ ‘Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness.’ ‘How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?’ ‘Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.’

“Such is the way in which the Lord, knowing the danger to which the unconverted and unpardoned are exposed, and, not willing that they should perish, is commanding and exhorting all such to act; and surely it will be admitted that He knows best what is good for sinners as well as for saints.”

ECCLESIASTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

GLASGOW CONGREGATION.

The Sabbath-school teachers, in connection with Main Street Church, met some time ago, and adopted the annual report of the school for the past year; but, owing

to the indisposition of Professor Murray, it had been found impracticable to hold a meeting for the purpose of laying it before the congregation. A copy of it has been forwarded to us, and, knowing that our readers must be anxious to learn what has been doing in this field by our brethren in Glasgow during the last year, we now lay before them a summary of the teachers' report.

In our number for May, 1856, we gave some particulars of the formation of the present school, or rather the resuscitation of the old one, and the success that had attended the first year of its revival. Matters were then very encouraging; and we are glad to notice from the present report, that, in some respects, they have been even more so during the second year. It is unnecessary to make any minute comparative statement between the two periods, as our former report—pp. 575-7 of our last volume—speaks for itself.

The average general attendance of pupils throughout the year was 88, or 42 boys, and 46 girls—being a decrease of 2 of the former, an increase of 9 of the latter, or a total increase of 7 on the whole over the previous year. The lowest number of boys present on any occasion was 30, the highest 63; and of girls, 31 and 63 respectively. Of both, the smallest number present was 63, and the largest 106. The average quarterly attendance was 93, 83, 85, and 91, showing that during the summer months it was not so much lessened as might have been looked for. The report contains two tabular statements, which, considering the class of children who are admitted, we think of great importance. The first refers to the length of time over which the various children have been connected with the school, and the other to the frequency with which they have been present. The former brings out the pleasing result that, of the children still upon the roll at the end of the year, no fewer than 65 have been connected with the school over periods of from twelve months to two years; and from the second we learn that 74 pupils have attended from 20 to 48 times during the year. Taking these two circumstances into consideration, and that, generally speaking, the spiritual interests of these boys and girls are either wholly neglected or little cared for by their parents, and that, in most cases, they have no opportunities for acquiring religious instruction elsewhere, we are much inclined to hope that the school is being an instrument for good among them. It is of itself a pleasing circumstance, that by this means they are taught to pay some outward respect for the Sabbath, and to learn that it is a day set apart for religious purposes. There has been a considerable improvement in the external conduct of many of the pupils while in the school, especially among the more advanced ones. Some appear really desirous to increase in scriptural knowledge; and this must prove a great encouragement to the teachers in the prosecution of their labours. Thirty-eight copies of the Bible have been disposed of to the children, at 6d. and 8d. each, during the year; and these, with tracts which are distributed among them once a month, have found their way to their homes; and we trust the best blessing of God may accompany them, and that, in His hands, they may prove the messengers of mercy and salvation to many.

We much regret to observe from the report, however, that there has been a great lack of male teachers, of whom, during the last nine months of the year, there were only 5. The staff of female teachers had been increased to 9, which in some measure made up for the deficiency; but we do think that such a paucity of male teachers, to meet the wants of so many boys on the roll, and whose numbers might be increased, might be overcome. Receiving so many young men from our other congregations, as that in Glasgow necessarily does, we believe that from among them a sufficient number could be found both able and willing to undertake the office of teachers, and who, once enlisted in so laudable a work, would prove efficient and diligent recruits. They have but to make a hearty beginning, with some sense of the responsibility that attaches to the office, to have their sympathies fully awakened on behalf of the benighted children, whose wants it is the object of the Sabbath-school to supply. Save those who are in the office of the ministry, there is perhaps no class of persons who require to work with greater diligence, watchfulness, and prayerful painstaking, or who must exercise greater self-denial, and, possibly, none meet with more painful trials and disappointments. But they are serving a master who does not call upon them to labour in their own strength or on their own charges. Engaged in furthering His glory and kingdom upon the earth, rich and abundant are the promises He has offered the devoted labourer in missionary work, and such work He has signally blessed. We trust, therefore, that those teachers—male and female—who are now

prosecuting this field in Glasgow congregation, will continue steadfastly and faithfully at their posts; and that, ere the current year is much farther advanced, a few more young men will feel it their duty to come cheerfully forward to join their ranks. We congratulate them on the success that has hitherto attended their efforts. They may not have seen any direct results of their labours in the conversion to Christ of any of their pupils, but still they must persevere; they are in the way of duty, and He who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," may, in His own time and way, bless the work of their hands. With discouragements they must only lay their account; but let them confide all to Him who has promised, "That he that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins," and "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." *

MEETING OF THE UNITED ORIGINAL SECESSION SYNOD.

At Adam's Square Church, Edinburgh,
28th April, 1857.

The which place and day, the Synod of United Original Seceders met at 12 o'clock noon, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. George Stevenson, Kilwinning, from Psalm xcvii. 1—"The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice."

After sermon, the Synod was constituted with prayer by Mr Stevenson, Moderator, and the roll was made up.

It was reported by the Presbytery of Ayr that, since last meeting of Synod, the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, senior, had been inducted pastor of the congregation at Colmonell; and by the Perth and Aberdeen Presbytery, that Mr John Barr, preacher of the gospel, had been ordained pastor of the congregation at Coupar-Angus, and that Mr John M'Kay, preacher of the gospel, had been ordained assistant and successor to the Rev. John Aitken, at Aberdeen; and their names were added to the roll. The Rev. John Robertson, of Ayr, was chosen Moderator, in room of Mr Stevenson, and took the chair accordingly. Appointed the usual Committees of Bills and Overtures, and of Funds, to meet after the close of the present sederunt. Perth and Aberdeen and Glasgow and Ayr Presbyteries asked and obtained leave to meet at the same time. The Synod then agreed to meet as a Committee of the whole house, to receive any papers which might presently be given in, and Mr Stevenson took the chair.

A representation and petition of the elders and certain members of the congregation of United Original Seceders, Adam's Square, Edinburgh, was given in, and read by the Clerk. It was moved by Mr Ritchie, Colmonell, and seconded by Mr Hobart, that the paper be not transmitted to the Synod in its present form. Moved by Dr Blakely, and seconded by Mr Manson, that the paper be transmitted *simpliciter*. Moved, also, by Mr Roger, and seconded by Mr Aitken, that the paper be transmitted *cum nota*, to the effect that it be recommended to the Synod to take up the paper in private. These motions being put to the vote, it was carried that the paper be transmitted *cum nota*, to the effect that it be recommended to the Synod to take up the paper in private.

The Synod then resumed, and the Clerk gave in the report of the Committee, as above, which was approved, and the recommendation of the Committee agreed to. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at 7 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, 7 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, and, after being constituted, the minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. The Clerk gave in the report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures, which was approved, and the recommendations of the Committee adopted. Proceeded to make arrangements for conducting the exercises to-morrow, which was formerly appointed to be observed as a day of fasting and humiliation by the Synod. It was arranged that Mr Manson preach in the forenoon, and Mr Robertson, Moderator, in the afternoon, in

* This interesting report was sent for insertion in our last number, but a day or two too late.—[Ed. O. S. M.]

room of Professor Murray, who, from indisposition, was unable to officiate. The Synod agreed to meet in the evening, at half-past 6 o'clock, for devotional exercises and conversation, and appointed Mr Ritchie, Colmonell, and Mr Barr, to conduct the devotional exercises. Took up the report of the Committee on Public Questions. Dr Blakely gave in the report, and proposed a series of resolutions upon public practical evils, which, after discussion, were recommended, in order to embody some additional suggestions made by members of Court. A petition to the House of Commons, for the repeal of the Maynooth Endowment Act, was read, and, after conversation, was also recommended, to be brought forward at a future sederunt. Agreed that, in consequence of to-morrow being appointed to be observed as a day of fasting and humiliation, the Synod adjourn, to meet for ordinary business on Thursday forenoon, at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 30th April, 1857, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the addition of the Rev. James Smith, Pollockshaws, and several elders. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. The Clerk gave in an additional report of the Committee of Bills and Overtures, which was approved, and the recommendations of the Committee adopted. The Synod agreed to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole house, for the purpose of conversing with the Rev. Archibald Brown, Edinburgh, in reference to a pamphlet lately published by him, entitled "Revival of Family Religion, in opposition to the Sabbath-School System." After a lengthened conversation, during which members expressed their mind generally in regard to the pamphlet, and pointed out and commented upon a number of passages in it which they deemed objectionable, Mr Brown then had an opportunity given him of making explanations, and of expressing what impression the discussion had made on his mind, when he requested time for consideration. Mr Brown's request was granted. The Synod then resumed, and the Clerk gave in the report of the Committee as above, which was adopted. It was agreed that, at the evening sederunt, the representation and petition from Adam's Square congregation be taken up first; and this was intimated to the commissioners from the congregation. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, and, after being constituted, the minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Proceeded to take up the representation and petition of the congregation of Adam's Square, Edinburgh, which was read by the Clerk; and Thomas Dudgeon, Robert J. Wood, and Allan Preshaw, appeared as commissioners in support of the representation; the commissioners were heard, and the members of Court put questions to them. Mr Brown was also heard, and parties were then declared to be removed. The members of Court then proceeded to express their mind in regard to the case, and, after lengthened discussion, it was agreed to delay the further consideration of the matter till a future sederunt. Took up a petition from the Session of Main Street congregation, Glasgow, anent the appointment of a Commission of Synod to visit the congregation, for the purpose of endeavouring to effect an amicable settlement of certain differences existing in that congregation. The Clerk read the petition; and Professor Murray and Mr John Smith, elder, were heard in support of the petition. The members of Court having delivered their minds, it was agreed that a Commission—consisting of Mr Manson, Mr Brown, Mr Graham, Mr Stevenson, Mr Roger, Mr Robertson, Mr Smellie, and Mr Barr, along with the Presbytery of Glasgow—be appointed, with full powers, to meet in Main Street Church, Glasgow, on Tuesday, the 5th day of May next, at 12 o'clock noon, to adjudicate in the case, and to settle it according to the laws of the Church; and appointed an extract of this minute to be read from the pulpit in Main Street Church to the congregation, on Sabbath next, the 3d day of May, at the close of public worship. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 1st May, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. The minutes of former seditur were read and approved. The Synod resolved itself into a Committee of the whole house, to receive a representation and petition from certain members of the congregation of Adam's Square, Edinburgh, in support of the Rev. Archibald Brown. The representation was read by the Clerk, and agreed to be transmitted. The Synod resumed, and the Clerk gave in the report of the Committee, which was adopted. Dr Blakely brought up the report of the Committee on Public Questions, of which in former minutes, and read a series of resolutions anent public practical evils, which were adopted, and agreed to be published in the Magazine and in the newspapers. The resolutions are as follow :—

"1. That this Synod views with alarm the increasing arrogance of Popery in these kingdoms, as manifested more especially in the erection of chapels, colleges, monasteries, and nunneries—in the persevering use of ecclesiastical titles, though forbidden by statute—and the harassing obstructions cast in the way of Parliamentary legislation, in relation to moral and social questions affecting the best interests of the Protestant community.

"2. That this Synod feels convinced that the recent aggressions of Popery in this country are chiefly to be attributed to the decline of vital religion—to ignorance and disregard of the principles of the Reformed and Covenanted Church—to false views of the nature of the anti-christian system—to the restoration of idolatrous worship in that section of the Episcopalian Church usually called Puseyite—to the support and countenance given to its institutions by the British Parliament, and to the general apathy of the Christian community in regard to its present movements and ultimate designs.

"3. That this Synod contemplates with the deepest sorrow the position assumed by candidates and constituencies during the recent election, and more especially the fact that pledges, regarding the protection of the Sabbath and the repeal of the Maynooth Endowment Act, were held in abeyance, while passing questions and party politics chiefly influenced the exercise of the elective franchise.

"4. That this Synod, while deeply grateful that motions for the withdrawal of the Maynooth endowment were so extensively supported in the recent Parliament, must nevertheless express the deepest regret that such motions were lost; and must renew its solemn protest against the continuance of the grant, as dishonouring to God, unjust to the community, opposed to the fundamental principles of our Protestant constitution, an aggravation of our national guilt, and calculated to provoke the righteous judgments of heaven.

"5. That this Synod, while rejoicing in the legitimate freedom of the press, and the efforts being made by religious societies and otherwise, for the dissemination of religious literature, must at the sametime explicitly condemn its prostitution in the production of a species of light reading, and, more especially, the circulation of infidel and immoral books and periodicals, which are poisoning the minds of the rising generation, corrupting our sources of knowledge, and sapping the foundations of the domestic and social fabric.

"6. That this Synod feels constrained to express the conviction that the British churches have not retained sufficient influence over the British press; nor have they made that provision for this reading age which the changing circumstances of society require; and, more especially, considering that the press is a moral power, which ought to be extensively employed under the immediate direction of the Church, and which cannot be safely entrusted to mere mercantile speculation, without resulting in the glaring anomaly of the Church receiving her own religious literature through the corrupting channel of pecuniary competition.

"7. That this Synod, while deeply interested in every legitimate movement for abridging the hours of labour, and affording healthful recreation to the working classes, must at the sametime explicitly reiterate its former protest against Saturday evening concerts—in some instances now conducted as

theatres—and all other such amusements as tend to unfit the mind for the exercises of the Sabbath, and prevent attendance on public worship.

"8. That this Synod explicitly condemns, as heretofore, all Sabbath trains, Sabbath steam-boats, Sabbath excursions for pleasure, and Sabbath trading, as direct violations of the fourth commandment, as subversive of civil and religious liberty, and calculated to demoralize those public servants to whom life and property are most largely entrusted.

"9. That this Synod respectfully calls upon and entreats all Christians and Christian churches to oppose and resist the above evils, that their corrupting influence may be prevented, and that they may be rooted out of the land, so that the present and rising generation may be saved from the Divine judgments denounced against such transgressors in the Word of God, and the destruction of all that is dear to us, as Protestants and as Christian members of the great human family."

The Synod agreed to meet in private, and take up the representation and petition of certain members of Adam's Square congregation in support of Mr Brown. The representation was read by the Clerk; and Messrs Matthew M. Stewart, Charles Lyon, James Sinton, and William Marwick, appeared as commissioners in support of the representation. The commissioners were heard, and the members of Court afterwards put questions to the commissioners. Parties were then declared to be removed, and it was agreed that the further consideration of this matter be delayed till a future sederunt. Proceeded to take up the Synod Treasurer's report on the funds, which was read by the Clerk. The report was approved, and the cordial thanks of the Synod were voted to Mr Stevenson, the Treasurer. The Synod earnestly recommended that congregations should be more liberal in their collections for the Synod Fund. The Synod, also, considering the large amount of contributions to the Mutual Assistance Scheme which has been received by the Treasurer after the accounts for this year were closed, agreed that £30 of that sum be distributed this year. The Clerk was instructed to convey the thanks of the Synod to William Buyers, Esq., Sydney, for his donation to the Mutual Assistance Scheme. In regard to the allocation of the amount collected for the Mutual Assistance Scheme, it was agreed that the present regulations should be continued in the meantime, and that the whole subject should be taken up and fully considered at next meeting of Synod. It was also agreed that an annual collection be made in all the congregations of the body for the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, and that for the present year the sum of £10 be given to each of the aged ministers in our collegiate charges from the Synod Fund. The Clerk read a report from the Synod Treasurer in regard to the testimonies on hand belonging to the Synod.

Took up the report of the Committee on the Magazine. The report was read by the Clerk, which was approved; and the cordial thanks of the Synod were voted to the Committee, and especially to Mr Jack, the Treasurer, for his exertions on behalf of the Magazine. It was moved and agreed to, that the sum of £30 be taken as a loan from the Synod Fund to meet the debt presently existing against the Magazine—which debt has been contracted by parties receiving the Magazine in America failing to transmit the sums due by them—it being understood that the said £30 be repaid when the Magazine fund will admit. Mr Manson having intimated his wish to resign the office of Editor of the Magazine, members having expressed their mind on the subject, the Synod passed a cordial vote of thanks to Mr Manson, expressed its deep sense of the efficient manner in which he had conducted the Magazine, and unanimously agreed that he be earnestly requested to continue to hold the office of Editor. Mr Manson agreed to continue accordingly. Mr Jack having also desired to be relieved of the office of Treasurer of the Magazine, the Synod instructed the Clerk to write a letter to Mr Jack, conveying the thanks of the Synod to him for his great exertions on behalf of the Magazine, and requesting him to continue the office of Treasurer. A petition from the congregation of Kirkaldy was read by the Clerk, requesting the dispensation of the Lord's Supper; and asking advice as to the admission of an elder from another part of the Church into the Session. The petition as to the Sacrament was referred

to the Committee of Supplies; and the Clerk was instructed to give the advice required. A reference from the Presbytery of Ayr, anent the granting of a moderation to the congregation of Ballylntagh, Ireland, was read by the Clerk; and, after suggestions made by members of Court, the matter was remitted to the Presbytery of Ayr, to issue it according to the laws of the Church. Petitions from the congregations of Arbroath and Toverdonny, anent the dispensation of the Lord's Supper, were referred to the Committee of Supplies. Another petition from the congregation of Arbroath, for pecuniary aid, was read; and, after conversation, the Synod agreed to grant the sum of £15 to the congregation, for assisting in liquidating the debt upon their church property, expressing an earnest hope that the congregation would make further efforts for removing all the debt. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at half-past 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, half-past 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, and, after being constituted, the minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Called for the report of the Committee on Letter of the Rev. Dr Shaw, Whitburn, and other documents, of which in Synod minutes of last year. The report was given in as follows:—

"The Committee appointed to consider the letter of Dr Shaw, and accompanying documents, have to report that, in their judgment, the Synod is not called upon to take up the matters therein referred to, as these have respect to a number of parties over whom the Synod has no control, and recommend accordingly."

The Synod adopted this report, and instructed the Clerk to transmit an extract of this minute to the Rev. Dr Shaw, Whitburn.

A petition to Parliament for the repeal of the Maynooth Endowment Act was read and approved; and it was agreed that it be transmitted to Mr Spooner, M.P., for presentation. Proceeded to consider the representations and petitions in the case of Adam's Square congregation, Edinburgh, of which in former minutes. The representations and petitions were read by the Clerk. The commissioners on both sides having been heard at former sederunts, the members of Court proceeded to give judgment in the case. After lengthened discussion, it was agreed to delay the further consideration of this case till a future sederunt. A Commission of Synod having been already appointed to meet in Glasgow on Tuesday next, the 5th current, it was agreed that the Synod adjourn, to meet in Main Street Church, Glasgow, on Wednesday, the 6th current, at 11 o'clock forenoon, to finish the business laid on the Synod's table. Closed with prayer.

Main Street Church, Glasgow,
6th May, 1857.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was opened with prayer by the Moderator. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Resumed consideration of the representations and petitions in the case of Adam's Square congregation, Edinburgh, which was left unfinished at the former sederunt. The representations and petitions were again read. Another representation, signed by certain female members of the congregation, in support of Mr Brown, was also read, and likewise two papers from the session of Adam's Square congregation. The commissioners on both sides were again allowed an opportunity of supporting the representations and petitions before the Court. The members of Court then put questions to the commissioners, after which Mr Brown was heard. Parties were then declared to be removed, and the Court proceeded to give judgment in the case. Members having delivered their mind, in the order of the roll, it was moved by Mr Manson, and seconded by Mr W. Robertson—"That the Synod, having considered the representation and complaint of the elders and certain members of the congregation of Adam's Square, Edinburgh—having heard commissioners in support of said representation, and also commissioners from certain other parties in behalf of Mr Brown, together with Mr Brown's reply,—the Synod, after painful and mature consideration

of the whole case, find that Mr Brown's usefulness is marred—that the peace, comfort, and edification of the congregation have been destroyed, and its very existence imperilled; and finding, moreover, that this distressing state of matters has in a great measure arisen from the course of conduct which Mr Brown has been pursuing for a considerable period, more especially the tone and spirit of various pamphlets which he has from time to time published, containing offensive and groundless charges against the Synod, and against individual members thereof; and likewise, the frequent references to these matters in his prayers and sermons; and, above all, the publication of his recent pamphlet, entitled 'The Revival of Family Religion, in opposition to the Sabbath-School System,' by which the complainers have been justly aggrieved, and which, as held and defended by the author, cuts off all hope of the restoration of harmony;—on these and other grounds submitted in the representation and complaint, the Synod feels constrained to dissolve the pastoral relation between the Rev. Archibald Brown and the congregation of Adam's Square, and that the session and members thereof be immediately taken under the care of Synod." It was also moved by Mr Roger, and seconded by Mr Smith—"That the Synod, having considered the representations and petitions from Adam's Square congregation, and having heard commissioners in support of said representations and petitions, after lengthened and deliberate consideration of the whole case, agree to appoint a Commission of Synod, to act along with the Presbytery of Edinburgh, to meet with Mr Brown and the opposing parties in the congregation, for the purpose of investigating more fully into the matters of difference between them; to deal with the parties separately or conjunctly, or both, as they may see cause; and, by the use of all legitimate and scriptural means, to endeavour to heal the painful divisions which unhappily exist in the congregation; but should it be found that, after labouring in this cause for a sufficient time, the Commission should fail in effecting this desirable object, they shall be empowered to grant a disjunction to the complainers, if they desire it; and in this case, the Synod shall instruct the Committee of Supply to grant them a supply of sermon." After reasoning, the Synod agreed to resume the consideration of this case at the evening sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at half-past 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, half-past 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after being constituted, the minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Resumed consideration of the representations and petitions from Adam's Square congregation, left unfinished at the forenoon sederunt. The two motions made in regard to the case were again read. The members of Court who had not been called upon at the forenoon sederunt to express their mind, were now called upon to do so; and Mr Manson having replied, it was agreed to put the motions to the vote. Before taking the vote, the Moderator engaged in prayer. The vote was then stated—first or second motion,—the first being that proposed by Mr Manson, and the second that proposed by Mr Roger. The roll being called, and votes marked, five voted for the first motion, and six for the second. The second motion was accordingly declared to be carried. Against this decision Dr Blakely dissented, for reasons to be afterwards given in, and craved extracts. In accordance with said decision, the Synod appointed the following members, along with the Presbytery of Edinburgh, to act as a Commission—viz., Mr Manson, Professor Murray, Mr Graham, Mr Stevenson, Mr Roger, Mr John Robertson, Mr Smith, Mr Smellie, Mr Braash, Mr Craig, Mr John Ritchie, Mr Ebenezer Ritchie, junior, Mr W. Robertson, Mr Hobart, Mr Ebenezer Ritchie, senior, Mr Barr, and Mr M'Kay. Appointed, also, said Commission to meet in Adam's Square Church, Edinburgh, on Tuesday, the 19th current, at half-past 6 o'clock evening, and that an extract of this minute be read from the pulpit on the Sabbath preceding, viz., the 17th current, at the close of public worship.

A pamphlet, entitled "Revival of Family Religion, in opposition to the Sabbath-School System," lately published by the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh, was laid on the table by Mr Manson, and agreed to be taken up by the Synod.

The pamphlet was read by the Clerk, after which Mr Manson addressed the Court, stating some of the reasons why he had laid the pamphlet on the table. The Synod agreed to resume the further consideration of the subject at the next sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon at half-past 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 7th May, half-past 10 o'clock, A.M.

The Synod met, and, after being constituted, the minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Resumed consideration of Mr Brown's pamphlet, laid on the table, and left unfinished at last night's sederunt. After conversation, it was agreed to hear Mr Brown. Mr Brown accordingly addressed the Court at considerable length, and the members of Court then expressed their mind upon the case. A motion was afterwards made, embodying a deliverance of the Synod in the case, when it was agreed to recommit said motion to the proposer of it, to be brought forward at the opening of the evening sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, and, after being constituted, the minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Resumed consideration of the pamphlet of Mr Brown, left unfinished at the forenoon sederunt. After reasoning, the following deliverance was adopted by the Synod:—"A pamphlet, entitled "Revival of Family Religion in opposition to the Sabbath-School System," by the Rev. A. Brown, Adam's Square, Edinburgh, was laid upon the Synod's table by the Rev. Thomas Manson, alleged to contain grave charges affecting the integrity of members of Synod, in connection with the exercise of their judicial functions, and also containing misrepresentations of the decisions of the Supreme Court. The pamphlet having been read by the Clerk, it was deemed proper that, seeing that the Synod had held a private conference with the author, and seeing that it had been frequently referred to in connection with the case from Adam Square congregation, Mr Brown should have an opportunity of stating what impression had been made upon his mind by these discussions, when Mr Brown read a lengthened statement, in which he declared his resolution to defend out-and-out the views therein contained;—on these and other grounds, the Synod finds that, *prima facie*, there seems to be matter contained in the pamphlet requiring careful judicial investigation; and, in order that justice may be done to all concerned, it now agrees to appoint a committee of its number to examine the said pamphlet, and, should they see cause, to prepare a libel in regular form, to be duly served upon the Rev. Archibald Brown, and followed up by judicial action in accordance with the laws of the Church." In accordance with this deliverance, it was moved and agreed to, that Mr Manson, together with the Moderator and Clerk of Synod, be appointed a Committee—Mr Manson to be Convener—to carry it into effect.

The report of the Home Mission Committee being called for, Dr Blakely gave in the report. Members having expressed their mind, approving of the suggestions made in the report, it was moved and agreed to, that the report be adopted, and that the thanks of the Synod be given to Dr Blakely and the Committee. The Synod empowered the Committee to correspond with the several ministers and sessions of the body anent Home Missionary work in their respective localities. Agreed to postpone the consideration of the report of the Committee on Rules of Ecclesiastical Procedure till a future meeting. Adjourned, to meet again in Adam's Square Church, Edinburgh, on Wednesday, the 20th current, at half-past 10 o'clock forenoon. Closed with praise and prayer.

Adam's Square Church, Edinburgh,
20th May, 1857, half-past 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Rev. John Robertson, Ayr, Moderator. Sederunt with him—the Rev. Thomas Manson, Perth; Rev. Professor Murray, Glasgow; Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh; Rev. J. Graham, Kilmarnock; Rev. G. Stevenson, Kilwinning; Rev. G. Roger, Auchinleck; Rev. J. Smith, Pollockshaws; Rev. Dr Blakely, Kirkintilloch; Rev. J. Smellie, Stranraer; Rev. W. F. Aitken, Midholm; Rev. W. Robertson, Dundee; Rev. J. Hobart, Carluke; and

Rev. J. Barr, Coupar-Angus; with W. Lindsay, Edinburgh, and J. Gowanlock, Midholm, ruling elders. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Appointed the Committee of Bills and Overtures to meet this evening in the adjoining session-house, at 6 o'clock. Called for the report of the Committee appointed to consider the pamphlet of the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh, entitled "Revival of Family Religion, in opposition to the Sabbath-School System," of which in former minutes. The Committee, through its Convener, Mr Manson, laid on the table the report embodying the draft of a libel to be served on Mr Brown, which was duly received. Called for the report of the Commission appointed to meet at Aberdeen in November last. The Clerk gave in and read the report, which was approved as highly satisfactory. Called for the report of the Commission appointed to meet in Main Street Church, Glasgow, on the 6th current, of which in former minutes. The Clerk read the report, which was also approved as highly satisfactory. Both these reports, with the documents referred to in them, were ordered to be kept by the Clerk *in retentis*. Called for the report of the Commission appointed to visit the congregation of Adam's Square, Edinburgh, on the 19th current, which was read by the Clerk. After conversation, the report was approved, and the request of the Commission granted, viz., that the Commission obtain leave to meet again at the close of this sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at half-past 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, half-past 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. The Clerk gave in a report of the Committee of Bills and Overtures, which was approved, and the recommendations of the Committee agreed to. Called for the report of the Commission appointed to visit Adam's Square congregation, Edinburgh, of which in former minutes. The report was given in and read by the Clerk. The Synod approved of the report, and adopted the recommendation of the Commission, to the effect, "That the Commission, having failed to effect a reconciliation, and finding the parties complaining do not desire a disjunction, declare that they could do nothing more in this painful case, and therefore agreed to leave the matter in the hands of the Synod." After reasoning, the Synod agreed to delay the further consideration of the case till a future sederunt.

Proceeded to take up the draft of a libel, laid on the table by the Committee at the forenoon sederunt, to be served on the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh, of which in former minutes. The draft was read. After reasoning, it was agreed to delay the further consideration of the matter till to-morrow forenoon. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon, at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 21st May, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the exception of the Rev. James Smith, Pollockshaws, and John Gowanlock, ruling elder. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. A letter from the Rev. Thomas Johnston, Philadelphia, in America, accompanying a call addressed to the Rev. John Barr, Coupar-Angus, from Shippen Street congregation, Philadelphia, was laid on the table by Mr Barr, requesting the advice of the Synod in reference to the matter. The letter and call were read by the Clerk. Members having expressed their mind, it was agreed to appoint a Committee, consisting of Mr Roger and Dr Blakely, to prepare a deliverance in the case, and to bring it forward at a future sederunt.

Resumed consideration of the draft of a libel in the case of the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh, of which in former minutes. The Synod having agreed to take up the draft, proceeded to consider the relevancy; and after going over each count *seriatim*, and correcting it, the whole were read; and the question being put from the chair—"Sustain the libel as relevant," it was agreed to sustain it. At this stage, Mr Brown was afforded an opportunity of holding a friendly conference with the Synod on this painful matter, when he intimated that he remained of the same opinion as before. After conversation, the Synod agreed to delay the further consideration of the case till the evening sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at half-past 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, half-past 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the exception of Rev. George Stevenson, Kilwinning. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Resumed consideration of the case of the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh, of which in former minutes. Proceeded to consider the grounds upon which the several counts of the libel already declared relevant are founded, when a number of passages from Mr Brown's pamphlet, and the minutes of Synod were selected, marked out, and agreed upon. The libel, with the grounds, was then adopted by the Synod; and the following Committee, consisting of the Moderator and Clerk of Synod, with Mr Manson—Mr Manson to be Convener—were appointed to superintend the printing of the libel, and to take the necessary steps for having it served on Mr Brown. Appointed the libel to be served on or before the first Tuesday of July next, and resolved that the Synod meet on the Tuesday after the third Sabbath of August, at 12 o'clock noon, in Adam's Square Church, Edinburgh, and that the business of the libel be taken up on the Wednesday following. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon, at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer by the Moderator.

Same place, 22d May, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. The minutes of former sederunt were read, corrected, and approved. The Clerk, at the request of the Synod Treasurer, asked whether he was to be empowered to pay the travelling expenses of the ministers attending this meeting of Commission and Synod, when it was agreed that no expenses should be given at this time.

Resumed consideration of the representation and complaint of the elders and certain members of the congregation of Adam's Square, Edinburgh, of which in former minutes. The members of Court having expressed their mind, in the order of the roll, on the whole case, after lengthened and deliberate consideration, the following deliverance was adopted by the Synod:—

"The Synod, having heard, and duly considered, the representation and complaint of the elders and certain members of the congregation of Adam's Square, Edinburgh—having appointed a Commission to investigate fully into the whole circumstances connected with that congregation, with the view of endeavouring, if practicable, to bring about a reconciliation—finding that said Commission have reported that, after travelling in the case, they had failed to gain that desirable object—finding also, in the course of the investigations which have been made, that the leading cause of the complaint arises from the publication of a pamphlet, entitled "Revival of Family Religion in opposition to the Sabbath-School System," by the Rev. Archibald Brown, Edinburgh; and finding finally, that the Synod has seen cause to institute proceedings anent said pamphlet, and have found a relevant libel against Mr Brown, grounded upon the pamphlet, and appointed said libel to be served in due course upon him,—the Synod, considering the whole circumstances of the case, resolve to delay giving final judgment in the matter of the complaint till the libel pending be issued; and in the meantime deem it expedient, for the ends of edification to all parties in the congregation, to make provision for an exchange of pulpits with Mr Brown, till the next meeting of Synod, it being distinctly understood that Mr Brown's relation to the congregation of Adam's Square remains unaffected thereby."

Upon this deliverance being intimated, Mr Brown read in the presence of the Court, and laid upon the table, the following protest:—

"While I continue, and desire to continue, to give all subjection to this Synod in the Lord, according to my Ordination Vows, yet seeing a libel has been prepared, declared relevant, and is soon to be served upon me, in which nothing is charged against my life or doctrine, and seeing a sentence has been passed, virtually, or rather practically, suspending me from the exercise of my ministry in my congregation while the libel was still pending; and still further, seeing that a matter so deeply

affecting my interests, and those of my congregation, has been proceeded with at a time when but a small proportion of the ministers of the body were present, and especially when the Court could not be held as regularly constituted—there not being a single ruling elder present, except perhaps one, who, as appears to me, must be regarded as a party,—I hereby protest in my own name, and that of my congregation adhering to my ministry, that, notwithstanding said sentence, it shall be lawful and warrantable for me to exercise my ministry, and dispense the ordinances of Divine appointment as heretofore in my congregation, in connection with, and as a part of the Synod; and further, that I shall be at full freedom to hold communion with ministers, elders, and people, in this body as heretofore; and that if, in consequence of this sentence, any minister or probationer shall attempt to exercise any part of my pastoral work, while the libel is not disposed of, the same shall be held and reputed as unjustly intruding upon my ministerial labours; and I hereby appeal to the next general and regularly constituted meeting of the Synod of United Original Seceders. I take instruments and crave extracts.

“(Signed) ARCHIBALD BROWN.

“Edinburgh, Adam's Square, 22d May, 1857.”

After conversation, the Synod adjourned, to meet again this afternoon at 5 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, 5 o'clock P M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the exception of Rev. John Graham, Kilmarnock, and Rev. John Barr, Coupar-Angus. The minutes of last sederunt were read and approved. Proceeded to take up the protest laid on the table by Mr Brown at the forenoon sederunt. After reasoning, it was agreed to appoint the following members a Committee,—viz, Professor Murray, Mr Roger, and Mr Hobart—to deal with Mr Brown anent his protest. The Committee retired, and, on their return, reported to the Synod that they had held a friendly conference with Mr Brown, with the view of ascertaining whether he was prepared to withdraw the protest he had laid on the Synod's table, and submit to the deliverance of the Synod. Mr Brown stated that, according to his present views, he did not see it his duty to withdraw the protest; and, among other things, he stated that he regarded himself as standing in the same relation to the Synod in which the first Seceders stood to the Established Church of Scotland after they laid their protest on the table of the General Assembly.

The Synod then, without pronouncing any judgment at present on the nature and grounds of the protest, considering that Mr Brown, after being dealt with by a Committee of the Synod, has declined the authority of the Court, and expressed his determination to adhere to his protest, finds itself shut up to the painful necessity of suspending him *ad interim* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions until next meeting of Synod, at which the libel, of which in former minutes, was appointed to be adjudicated upon. The Synod appointed an extract of the above minute to be transmitted to Mr Brown. Appointed, also, Mr Smellie to preach to Adam's Square congregation on Sabbath first, and to read this minute at the close of public worship.

Called for the report of the Committee anent the call addressed to the Rev. John Barr from a congregation in Philadelphia, America. The report was given in as follows:—

“Seeing the papers in this case have not been addressed to the Court, and, more especially, seeing that the call to Mr Barr has come from another section of the Christian Church in America, with which this Synod has no direct ecclesiastical relation, this Court cannot formally take up the matter, though ready to give advice to Mr Barr therein; the tenor of which is, that while the Synod deeply sympathizes with all who are appearing on behalf of the principles of the Reformed and Covenanted Church of Scotland, and while sympathizing with the circumstances of the congregation calling Mr Barr, it cannot entertain the idea of encouraging any of its ministers to entertain or accept any call from any congregation beyond the bounds of its ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and, more especially, considering the lack of labourers in the Original Secession Church, and the recent happy settlement of Mr Barr

over his present charge, the counsel of the Synod must necessarily be, that Mr Barr should decline further consideration of the call, intimating to the brethren in America the sympathy of the Court with them, and expressing the desire that the great King and Head of the Church may direct them aright, and, in His own good time, provide for them a man by whom they may be fed."

The Synod adopted the above report, and agreed to give an extract of it to Mr Barr, for the purpose of its being transmitted to America. Agreed that the minutes of this meeting of Synod be published in full in the Magazine. The Presbytery of Ayr requested leave to meet at Ayr on the first Tuesday of June. The Presbytery of Glasgow also requested leave to meet on the Tuesday after the first Sabbath of June. The Moderator, after engaging in prayer and praise, and intimating that the Synod would hold its next meeting in Adam's Square Church, Edinburgh, on the Tuesday after the third Sabbath of August, at 12 o'clock noon, closed the Synod by pronouncing the Apostolic benediction.

REPORT OF THE HOME MISSION COMMITTEE,

Submitted to the Synod of United Original Seceders at its Annual Meeting, held in Main Street Church, Glasgow, May 7, 1857.

IN presenting this report of the Home Mission, your Committee deeply regret the entire lack of data from which to draw up a lengthened and cheering statement. But considering that your Committee has not been formally dissolved, the responsibility of appointment in a matter of so much importance is still felt, and consequently this report is presented in order to give in detail matters as they now stand, in the hope that the Synod will either relieve them of responsibility, or enable them to undertake something which may be worthy of general support, and which may annually furnish matters of interest for the consideration of the Supreme Court.

Since presenting last report, it is known to all that the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, senior, who was then labouring successfully in Ayr, as missionary, has been recently settled in the congregation at Colmonell, and that consequently the Ayr Mission station has been deprived of a regular agency. Though grateful to see once more a settled dispensation of ordinances at Colmonell, your Committee cannot help expressing deep regret that the Synod, as such, is now left without even one ordained missionary. It is at the same time matter of thankfulness to find that the Ayr Mission is not abandoned, although thus deprived of its highly esteemed missionary. From the Directors' Report, it appears that there is a noble resolution to continue the mission; and the advertisement for an agent, which has appeared in the Magazine, shows the course which they are prepared to adopt in the prosecution of their object—namely, that they are willing to engage a properly qualified lay-agent, until the services of a gospel minister may again be available. It is the earnest desire of the Ayr Mission Directors that this matter should be specially considered by the Synod. For the present, the funds remaining on hand at the close of their engagement with Mr Ritchie, are found sufficient to meet the current expenditure, without making any claim upon the Synod's Mission Fund. The district in Wallacetown, formerly assigned to Mr Ritchie, is being kept open by the circulation of tracts and the holding of prayer meetings. It must be matter of gratitude to all, that the Directors of the Ayr Mission are resolved to do all that they can, though unable to do all that they could desire, without a regular agency. It is hoped that their example may stimulate others to go and do likewise. Might not each congregation do something to further this good work, though it were only in the circulation of sound theological

tracts, visitation by the elders, and the holding of prayer meetings in destitute localities.

Your Committee cannot close without reminding the Synod that an appalling mass of heathenism surrounds our very churches in the cities, towns, and villages of this highly favoured land—that many of the rising generation are left unbaptized, and wholly destitute of religious training—that the corruptions of the mass are affecting the entire Christian community—that the field is fast preparing for the most extensive diffusion of infidelity or Popery, and that this mass of heathenism is within our reach, and loudly calls for our most energetic Christian efforts. Let us not be found saying practically, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” while souls are perishing eternally, without one to point them to the only Saviour. Your Committee are still of opinion that no difficulties of an ecclesiastical kind can furnish an excuse for entirely neglecting those without. In each congregation it is presumed that something might be done; but your Committee would earnestly urge upon the Synod the adoption of some measures by which the pastors of smaller congregations might be employed in missionary work, and by which they might be proportionally paid out of those mission funds which are, or may be placed at the disposal of the Synod. Having urged this measure so frequently without any result of a practical kind, it is once more presented, in order to stir up the members of Court by way of remembrance, in the hope that the Synod may yet see its importance, and calmly deliberate in regard to its practicability. Could this suggestion be carried out, it might tend to strengthen weak congregations, to aid in their funds, and also to give an evangelistic tone to the labours of those who are bearing faithful testimony to the despised principles of the Covenanted Reformation.

In fine, your Committee would humbly suggest the propriety of the Synod spending one or more sederunts, at each Annual Meeting, on the consideration of this subject alone; and they would earnestly request ministers and sessions to give this matter the fullest deliberation, and to report to the Convener of the Home Mission Committee the state of matters in their respective localities, and the possibility of doing something to reach the outcast. Your Committee would ask, in fine, permission to correspond with each session, and also to encourage suitable parties, should such present themselves, for missionary work. Commending this deeply important subject to the prayerful consideration of this Court, your Committee would now submit the foregoing statement, trusting that the Head of the Church may open up our way, and yet enable us to take our place in the field of missionary effort.

Signed in behalf of the Committee by

JOHN BLAKELY, Convener.

1856.

April 21.	To Balance of last Account,	£158	11	10
	Received after Accounts were closed—			
"	Collection from Kilwinning,	£3	3	6
"	do. " Colmonell,	2	0	0
"	do. " Pollockhaws,	1	0	0
1857.				
April 22.	do. " Aberdeen,	£2	2	0
"	do. " Auchinleck,	1	10	0
"	do. " Ayr,	4	0	0
"	do. " Bessy,	1	0	0
"	do. " Carlisle,	4	0	0
"	do. " Carnoustie,	0	10	0
"	do. " Cloa, Strichen, ..	1	0	0
"	do. " Coupar-Angus, ..	1	2	6
"	do. " Dundee,	2	2	10
"	do. " Edinbergh,	2	0	0
"	do. " Glasgow,	4	4	6
"	do. " Kirkaldy,	1	10	0
"	do. " Kirkcubrecht,	3	0	0
"	do. " Kirriemuir,	1	15	0
"	do. " Kilwinning,	2	15	6
"	do. " Midholm,	3	18	0
"	do. " Perth,	2	10	0
"	do. " Pollockhaws,	1	0	0
"	do. " Shottaburn,	3	7	6
"	do. " Stranraer,	3	0	0
"	do. " at Synod in May,	0	2	0
"	do. " at Synod in October, ..	0	11	5

Legacy by late Miss E. Brown, Dundee,	£100	0	0
Legacy by late Miss Aitken, Aberdeen,	10	0	0
Donation by John Brown, Esq., Dundee,	100	0	0
Interest on Bank Account,	219	0	0
	7	12	10
	£429	14	5

1857.

April 22.	By Travelling Expenses of Ministers in supply- ing Vacant Congregations,	£33	1	6
"	" Salary to Synod Clerk,	10	0	0
"	" do. to Professor Murray,	20	0	0
"	" Donation to Dundee Congregation,	50	0	0
"	" Paid Synod Officer, two Meetings of Synod, Synodical Expenses, do.	2	2	0
"	" Stamps, &c., due to Treasurer,	1	5	11
		0	10	0
		£116	19	5
	Balance to new Account,	812	15	0

£429 14 5

MUTUAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME.

1856.	April 21.	To Balance of last Account,.....	£14	7	2
		Received after Accounts were closed—			
		Collection from Kilwinning,.....	£9	13	0
	"	do " Kirkcaldy,.....	1	0	0
1857.	April 22.	do " Aberdeen,.....	£13	10	3
	"	do " Auchinleck,.....	6	14	6
	"	do " Ayr,.....	33	5	8
	"	do " Balmullo,.....	0	15	0
	"	do " Birsay,.....	6	6	0
	"	do " Carlisle,.....	8	0	0
	"	do " Colmonell,.....	3	4	0
	"	do " Coupar-Angus,....	6	0	0
	"	do " Dundee,.....	6	10	0
	"	do " Edinburgh,.....	4	7	0
	"	do " Glasgow,.....	24	0	0
	"	do " Kilmarnock,.....	3	12	0
	"	do " Kilwinning,.....	9	0	1
	"	do " Kirkcaldy,.....	6	0	0
	"	do " Kirriemuir,.....	5	0	0
	"	do " Midholm,.....	15	0	0
	"	do " Perth,.....	12	10	0
	"	do " Shottsburn,.....	5	0	0
	"	do " Strausar,.....	15	0	0
	"	do " Thurso,.....	2	0	0
		Donation from W. Buyers, Esq., Sydney,.....	£15	0	0
		Donation from Mr Beattie, Ar- broath,.....	1	0	0
		Donation from a Friend, Liverpool,	1	0	0
		Interest on Bank Account,.....	17	0	0
			1	13	10
			£228	17	6

1856.	April 30.	By Auchinleck,.....	M.	S.	
	"	" Kirriemuir,.....	—	£20	0
	"	" Kilmarnock,.....	£10	20	0
	"	" Perth,.....	10	17	0
	"	" Birsay,.....	—	7	0
	"	" Dundee,.....	10	—	0
	"	" Colmonell,.....	—	9	0
	"	" Coupar-Angus,.....	—	9	0
	"	" Carlisle,.....	—	5	0
	"	" Aberdeen,.....	—	2	10
				£189	10
		Surplus divided among Ministers whose Congre- gations contribute to this Fund,.....		76	0
		Balance due by Treasurer,.....		13	7
				£228	17
				6	6

FUND FOR STUDENTS.

1857.		
April 22. To Donations—		
Mr Morrison, Canada,	£50	0 0
Mr Buyers, Aberdeen,	1	0 0
Mr Thos. Brown, Edinburgh,	1	0 0
Mr Beattie, Arbroath,	1	0 0
Two Friends in Ayr, ...	1	10 0
A Friend, Dundee, ...	1	0 0
A Friend, Dundee, per Rev. Mr Robertson,	1	0 0
A Friend, per do.,	1	0 0
A Friend, Clola,	1	0 0
A Friend, Thurso, ...	1	0 0
A Widow's mite, Thurso,	1	0 0
Three Half-crowns from Main Street Congreg.,	0	7 6
	£80	17 6
Interest on £42 while in Perth Bank,	0	2 8
Interest on Bank Account,	0	14 1
	£81	14 3

1856.		
April 22. By Payment to Students, per Prof. Murray, £4 0 0		
By Payment to two Students, per Treasurer, 18 0 0		
Balance due by Treasurer, ... 44 14 3		
	£81	14 3

MISSION FUND.

1856.		
April 21. To Balance of last Account, £148 2 8		
1857.		
Jan. 8. From Ayr Congregation, ... 2 2 0		
April 22. Interest on Bank Account, ... 4 6 2		
	£154	10 5

1856.		
Aug. 4. Paid to Ayr Mission, £20 0 0		
1857.		
April 22. Balance to next Account, ... 134 10 5		
	£154	10 5

FUND FOR AGED AND INFIRM MINISTERS.

1856.		
April 30. To Donations—		
Rev. Dr Blakely, £2	0	0
A Friend, per Rev. J. Robertson,	0	10 0
A Friend, per Rev. W. Robertson,	1	0 0
	£3	10 0

1857.		
April 22. By Balance in hands of Treasurer, £3 10 0		
	£3	10 0

SUMS RECEIVED SINCE THE ACCOUNTS WERE CLOSED.	
FOR STUDENTS' FUND.	FOR SYNOD FUND.
Rev. J. Mackay, £2 0 0	Colmonell, £1 12 0
Mr Morrison, America, ... 2 0 0	Mr Morrison, America, ... 2 0 0
Mr Smith, Cautyre, ... 1 0 0	
Mr Lindsay, Edinburgh, ... 1 0 0	
An Elder, Perth, ... 1 0 0	
A Friend, Main Street, ... 0 2 6	
	FOR MUTUAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME.
	J. M'Clew, Esq., Port Patrick, £10 0 0
	J. Hielop, Esq., Baith, ... 0 5 0

HOME RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

SYNOD OF UNITED ORIGINAL SECEDERS.

It will be seen, by the minutes of Synod in the preceding pages of this Magazine, that the Court, in its protracted meeting, were chiefly occupied about the case of the Rev. Archibald Brown, Edinburgh; and, further, that all the discussion and agitation have arisen in a great measure from the interpretations which Mr Brown has put on a certain resolution adopted by the Synod at its meeting in Edinburgh in 1856. Though this resolution is printed in the May number of the Magazine for that year, and will be found at page 579—as that resolution is not given by Mr Brown in his pamphlet containing his strictures on it, and as this must be matter of deep interest to the readers of the Magazine throughout the Original Secession Church, and also to some beyond the body,—we here give the resolution a prominent place, and append a few brief remarks.

SYNOD'S RESOLUTION ANENT HOME MISSION WORK.

“That the Synod, while viewing themselves as a branch of the Reformed and Covenanted Church of Scotland, witnessing, in a state of Secession, for her scriptural principles and attainments, are, at the same time, deeply impressed with the obligation lying upon them to endeavour, to the utmost of their power, to disseminate the truths of Christ, both in their own land and throughout the world; and, considering that it is a fact as undeniable as it is appalling, that large masses of our home population, both in town and country, are sunk in ignorance and vice, and ‘living without God and without hope,’ the Synod feel that there is a loud call to employ every means warranted by the Word of God for imparting to them religious instruction, and promoting their temporal and eternal welfare.

“The Synod further declare, that, so far from Home Missionary

work being inconsistent with their position and duty as Seceders, they are laid under superadded obligation, from their distinctive principles, to prosecute such work; inasmuch as the National Covenants, for whose perpetual obligation they testify, bind them to endeavour the extirpation, not only of Popery and Prelacy, but also of superstition, heresy, and profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness.

"In regard to the means to be employed for carrying this object into effect, the Synod, while they hold that it is the incumbent duty of Christian parents to instruct their own children, and while they lament the practice, now so common, of devolving that sacred duty on Sabbath-school teachers, are, at the same time, satisfied that Sabbath schools, conducted under the superintendence of ministers and sessions, may be warrantably had recourse to, as a means of communicating religious knowledge to those children whose spiritual interests would otherwise be neglected; and so far as regards the distribution of Bibles and orthodox tracts, and the exertions of ministers in their respective localities, the Synod are persuaded that there is an urgent necessity, in present circumstances, for the employment of such means. And the Synod agree that a collection be made for Home Mission purposes in all the congregations throughout the body."

It will be seen that the Synod, in this resolution, is, so far from overlooking the adult irreligious population, including parents—caring only for the children,—that it urges that we are under superadded obligation, from our distinctive principles, to prosecute Home Missionary work, in which parents are especially dealt with. Here, also, the Synod inculcates pointedly on Christian parents the duty of instructing their own children, and laments the practice, now so common, of devolving that sacred duty on Sabbath-school teachers. Again, it is to be marked, that the Synod merely says that Sabbath schools may be warrantably had recourse to as a means of communicating religious knowledge to those children whose spiritual interests would otherwise have been neglected. And, be it observed also, that the Sabbath schools spoken of in the Synod resolution are not voluntary associations, but such as are "conducted under the superintendence of ministers and sessions. Surely all justice and fairness, not only to the Synod, but also to his readers, demanded that the subject commented on by Mr Brown should have been given along with the comments—the resolution of Synod, or the "law," as it has been called, along with the strictures. Nor do we doubt that the resolution of Synod will furnish its own vindication to every unprejudiced mind, as, at least, far enough from the left hand extreme. Nor do we believe that there is one member of Synod who does not attach the greatest importance to the family institute as a body corporate, and is not as earnest as Mr Brown can be to see family religion and family instruction maintained, revived, and extended. And it ought to be distinctly

known, that the Synod has no quarrel with Mr Brown for his zeal on behalf of the family institute and family religion, but would have rejoiced in this had it been manifested in the use of lawful means.

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD.

Two questions of considerable interest came before this Court in its late meeting at Glasgow. The one was as to the use of the Elective Franchise, in regard to which there has been a difference of opinion among Reformed Presbyterians; and, finding that they could not come to a unanimous deliverance on this subject, the question was left in *statu quo*—no judicial declaration as to duty in this matter being attempted. This, at least, is our understanding of what took place. The other question was anent the eligibility of ministers of Reformed Presbyterian Churches in other countries by congregations in Scotland. The connection of the Reformed Presbyterians in Scotland with the Reformed Presbyterians in Ireland and America is somewhat ambiguous. In both these countries the Reformed Presbyterians have been divided, on some important points of principle, into two sections for a considerable period; and the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in Scotland have never yet declared formally, or, we believe, in any definite way, which of the parties, in the controversies which issued in this division in both countries, they approve, but claim a kind of anomalous relation to four bodies—two of which are, on some important points of principle, antagonistic to the other two.

So long as this state of matters continues, it is difficult to see how any of these bodies can properly be contemplated as a sister-church by the Synod of Reformed Presbyterians in Scotland; and, so long as matters remain in this state, it does not appear that they could consistently fraternize with any of these bodies as parties with whom they were in full communion. But, as is well said in "the report of the proceedings of this Synod, now before us, in reference to this subject—"Let the Scottish Synod declare with which of the two Synods in Ireland, and of the two in America, they can hold fellowship, and then the difficulty is removed." "This Synod, however," it is added, "appears wholly unacquainted with the principles and practice of any or all of these four Synods, and yet receive members from all the four to full communion." If this is fact, there is surely an urgent call for some change. It is stated, further, in the introduction to "the report of the proceedings in reference to the eligibility of ministers from Ireland and America to vacant congregations in Scotland," that "great stress" was laid by several of the speakers on the question of jurisdiction; and it was chiefly because of this that the prayer of the memorial was refused,—that, in terms of the resolution, for "want of a common jurisdiction, the Synod deem it inexpedient to make any change in the practice hitherto pursued by this Church." Now, we have always thought that no church could be entitled to occupy the place of a sister-church, in whose administration, in regard to doctrine, discipline, and judgment regarding qualifications for the ministerial office, we had not full confidence.

The success of the mission of this Synod in the New Hebrides is

very cheering; and there is an urgent demand for an increase of labourers.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

It appears, from the reports submitted to the Synod of this Church, that, during the past year, the students attending the literary classes, as well as those of theology, have enjoyed a very careful superintendence; that there has been an increased liberality, on the part of congregations, for the support of ministers; that the fund recently instituted for aged and infirm ministers already amounts to £17,000; and that 267 congregations were now entirely free of debt. The following statement regarding the mission of this Church at Old Calabar will be read with interest:—

“When we consider that in the towns of Calabar, where, eleven years ago, unbroken heathenism reigned, nearly one thousand persons are every Lord’s-day listening to the proclamation of Divine truth; that in Creek Town especially, a congregation of between three and four hundred persons, with the King at their head, assembles every Sabbath at the sound of the town-bell, to engage in the worship of God, and that the whole day is marked by external quiet and decorum; that between two and three hundred children and young persons are receiving instruction in the week-day and Sabbath schools; that many of the cruel and bloody practices of the country have been either abolished or greatly modified; that thirty converts have been baptized, the great majority of whom have, amidst many temptations and perils, attested the sincerity of their profession; that a Christian Church has been formed where, for thousands of years, Satan had his seat; that several of the missionaries and teachers now speak to the people in their own tongue; that various school-books, portions of the Scriptures, and the Shorter Catechism, translated into the native language, are in circulation; that a grammar and a dictionary have been prepared, and are in the hands of the printer; and that, during these eleven years, there have been only two deaths among the European agents—we feel that we have special reason to bless God for His goodness to the mission, and to say that the hand of the Lord has been there.”

FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

The Assembly of this Church keeps up its usual interest, and her different schemes enjoy their wonted prosperity. The proposed union between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches—in resolutions, which had been sometime circulated, and signed by the most influential members in both Churches,—was so far introduced to the Assembly by an overture from the Glasgow Presbytery, in which Court the subject had been taken up and discussed. This overture embodied statements condemning the views propounded in the resolutions; and the discussion of the subject was waived from various considerations. But it seemed to be so especially from an apprehension that this would be attended with peril to the comfort and harmony of the Assembly. Lord Panmure and Mr Dunlop, who had signed these resolutions, were present—declaring that they were prepared to defend the course which they had pursued, and which was condemned in the overture. This movement, however, is such that there is reason to think it must soon be met on the merits of its principles, as it was in the Free Presbytery of Glasgow.

It is remarkable that in Australia there is a movement for union among Presbyterians in what may be considered an opposite direction.

This was introduced for consideration into the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, but postponed till further information be obtained.

CONGREGATIONAL UNION IN ENGLAND.

The explanations given by Dr Davidson in his pamphlet have been found, by a large majority of the committee appointed to investigate the case, unsatisfactory; and it remains to be seen to what action this result will lead. It is cause of thankfulness that there is evidence that the great majority of the ministers in this body are sound in the faith, and have no sympathy with Dr Davidson in his views of inspiration and as to other important points of Divine truth. But it is cause of deep sorrow that there seems to be a considerable number who are either prepared to homologate his views, or think lightly of the neological character of the doctrines which he has published, and by which he is still disposed to stand.

MADAGASCAR.

The following summary of the statements of Mr Ellis, at the meeting of the London Missionary Society, regarding the state of Christians in this island, and his reception on his recent visit, will be read with deep interest:—

“ Mr Ellis was received with much applause on his return from Madagascar. After reverting to the early history of the mission, he thus spoke of its progress in adversity :—It was a remarkable circumstance that Christianity had not only continued to extend under the adverse and persecuting laws, but conversions to the truth had been more rapid than in any missionary field under the most favourable auspices. The numbers of the Christians might be estimated by thousands; and not only were their numbers great, but their characters were exalted. Their standard of Christian excellence would suffer nothing by the closest scrutiny and comparison with the Christians of this land. He made this statement advisedly, and as the result of observation and much inquiry. They honoured God, obeyed the commands of Christ, and walked in the ordinances of the Lord blameless. In the year 1852, tidings arrived which led to the hope that there might be a change, and he then visited Madagascar, and had done so twice since; the last time he was permitted to visit the capital, 300 miles from the coast, and have an interview with the Queen herself. She received him frankly; and the officers of the empire, of all grades, also treated him with great respect, and even kindness, and this although it was well known that he was connected with the London Missionary Society and missionary objects: the welcome he met with from the Christians, language would altogether fail to express. Many of them took several day's journeys to meet him to give him a brotherly greeting, and to inquire concerning the progress of the kingdom of Christ in England. When he told them of the affection felt towards them, and of the prayers offered on their behalf, they wept with joy, saying, that they could not make answer, but knelt down and gave thanks to God, one of the native pastors leading the devotions. Mr Ellis read a letter he had received from a native minister, giving an account of the rapid progress of the gospel among the people, and their very intelligent understanding of it. Mr Ellis also read a number of extracts from conversations that took place on the trials of some of the Christians who were put to death, showing how entirely they understood, and how deeply they loved, the gospel. When he left the brethren in Madagascar, they exhorted him to ask the Christians in England to make their prayers strong for the land of Madagascar.”

THE
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SEPTEMBER, 1857.

SKETCH OF THE EASTERN CHURCH, INCLUDING THE
GREEK AND RUSSIAN.

THE present condition of so large a community of professing Christians as that of the Greek and Russo-Greek Churches must be matter of deep interest to all the friends of true religion and the enlightened lovers of mankind. The state of Roman Catholics, both in their numbers, principles, and practice, has been set in various forms before the public mind in Protestant countries. But it is only shreds of information that have been circulated as to the actual condition of the degenerate and corrupt communities which bear the Christian name in the East. The numbers of nominal Christians throughout the Turkish and Russian Empires is supposed to be about sixty millions, or as many as all the Protestants throughout the world. Asia Minor, which might be denominated the cradle of Christianity—where so many Christian Churches, planted and watered by the Apostles themselves, once flourished—is now, and has long been, almost a spiritual wilderness, without so much as one oasis amidst the desolation, till within these few years, when, by the efforts of Protestant missionaries, some green spots have been produced. Ephesus is now a total desolation—not only no church, but no Christians reside on the spot on which it formerly stood. Sardis is in ruins, and no Christian residing there. Laodicea, formerly a very distinguished, wealthy, and populous city, said to be the mother-church of sixteen bishoprics, is now utterly desolate, only inhabited by the wild beasts of the desert.

GREEK CHURCH IN TURKEY.

In a communication dated Constantinople, April 3, 1857, the correspondent of the *News of the Churches* gives first, what may be called the bright side of the picture, with reference to the past history and present condition of this Church, in these words—"Every one acquainted with ecclesiastical history knows that, with all its errors, the

Greek, and indeed all the Oriental Churches—Armenian, Abyssinian, Coptic, &c.—are valuable witnesses against the corruptions in doctrine and practice of the Papacy, and its equally blasphemous and daring encroachments on the prerogatives of God and man. What may be called the standards of the Greek Church are unexceptionable. The Nicene Creed* is that to which adherence is required from parents at the baptism of their children; and no Council of Trent has ever been held in the East, to rivet by Divine authority, falsely so called, the errors which in course of time have crept in." This writer, however, has to add to this modicum of commendation the humiliating and mournful admission, that, "practically, the condition of the people is not superior to that of the members of the Church of Rome; while, owing to the far inferior civilization of the East, the education of the priesthood of the Eastern is very much behind that of the clergy of the Western Church. We must add, however," he says, "that if they have not the general intelligence, far less the distinguished learning of Baronius, Bellarmine, Bossuet, Fénelon, and others, neither have they such schools as those of Loyola and Liguori, nor has the anti-national spirit exhibited itself to any such extent in the Greek as in the Western Church."

He next proceeds to give some statistics of the Greek Church, in the city of Constantinople and its vicinity, as to the number of churches, and also as to the modes of worship, the requisites to admission to sacred office, and some other things, by which glimpses of the actual condition of the Greek Church are obtained. "In the city and in Pera, there are twenty-six Greek churches; in Scutari, and on the shores of the Bosphorus, there are thirty-four or thirty-six more; making the whole number about sixty for a population of at least a quarter of a million, or more than four thousand souls to each church. This fact alone indicates that there is ample room for church extension, if only the sort of thing to remedy prevailing evils, were the extension of the church as it now is. Unfortunately, however, such is not the case. To the overwhelming mass of the people the worship is conducted in a dead language—the ancient Greek; and if this be so where the people speak modern Greek, how much more must it be the case where, as in the northern provinces of Turkey, the vernacular languages are Illyrian, Bulgarian, Wallachian, &c.? Then the service is restricted to the reading of the Scriptures and prayers, creeds, &c., burning incense, arranging processions, exhibiting relics, just as in the Church of Rome. Preaching is quite a rarity, and much too serious a thing for common practice. Churches in the interior could be mentioned in which there has been no preaching for many years. Even in the cities it is never thought of except during Lent, and not always then. When it is resorted to, some of the homilies of Chrysostom are generally selected for the edification of the people—and so far well. We recently learned from a most intelligent British gentle-

* The Nicene Creed contains explanations of the Apostles' Creed, as it is called, in reference to the Supreme Deity, the Person, and Sonship of Christ, in opposition to Arius. But it should be known that the Romish Church also adopted this creed, and even the Athanasian.

man, long entrusted with offices of high importance in the Ionian Republic, that, on his removal to one of the islands of the Confederation, he succeeded in inducing the officiating ecclesiastic to preach only by paying a considerable sum as a remuneration for the extra trouble. His proceeding led, however, to a similar step on the part of the corporation of the island, and since then preaching has not been quite so unusual. The key to this state of things, which is universal over the Greek Church, is to be found in the utterly illiterate condition of the clergy. For admission into holy orders there are only two requisites—that the candidate allow his beard and the hair of his head to grow to a sufficiently venerable length, and that he be prepared with a sum of money, varying according to his presumed ability, which in one form or another he must pay before he can receive episcopal ordination. It is sad to have to bring such a charge against so extensive a section of the Christian Church, but you may rely on my authority being altogether unquestionable. Nor is even this so bad as things were some twenty or thirty years ago. The blessed labours of the British and Foreign Bible Society for these lands had but just begun, copies of the Scriptures were excessively scarce and dear, education was confined to a very limited circle indeed of the community, and the ordinary attainments of the clergy, both of the Armenian and Greek Churches, were to read, or in some cases repeat by heart, the liturgy of the Church, without understanding one word of it."

In reference to the manner in which the clergy of the Greek Church are supported, this writer states—"The priesthood of each church are supported by the population for whose use the church was erected, and they draw their usual revenue from fees at baptisms, marriages, and funerals, besides other rites of little importance. One, however, must be specified, as many of your readers may find it new to them. Previous to being admitted to the communion, the candidates are 'anointed with oil,' according to the prescription of the Apostle James, they being considered as spiritually 'sick,' and hence in the circumstances contemplated in the precept. This ceremony is regarded as one of the seven mysteries, and, though no fee is absolutely required, each recipient is expected to give as much as he can. In some instances the clergy are supported by the revenue arising from houses and shops. The patriarch is the political head of the nation, and is elected by the synod of twelve archbishops. The corporations indeed have a voice, but are rarely consulted, while the real decision rests with those who are best able to find a golden avenue to the ears of the electors and of the Turkish government. The Greek community is divided here, as is the case in most other places, into Tories and Reformers, and, just as in Britain, sometimes the one and sometimes the other have the preponderance. It is pleasing to know, however, that progress is decidedly making, especially in the matter of education, as I shall just mention. I may further mention that the national taxes are arranged and collected by a council of laymen, and that, in addition to the properly episcopal revenue, the patriarch receives a certain sum annually from each priest, besides certain fees

on the ordination of each of the Greek bishops in Turkey, or their transference from one see to another."

The following general remarks are then added:—"The Greek Church thus presents, like the Church of Rome, a motley congeries of good and bad, the accumulation of ages, in which many precious relics of a better time still subsist, but lost and disfigured by superstitions and idolatrous additions; while from both clergy and people, to all appearance, the living spirit has almost quite departed. To deny that God may have his chosen ones within its communion would be contrary to analogy, and perhaps to fact, and would be a presumptuous limitation of the Holy One of Israel; but undoubtedly the number of such as 'have not bowed the knee to Baal' must be very small indeed. And so strong has been the power of custom, superstitious regard to antiquity, self-interest, all combined with ignorance of the truth, that almost to the present day no inroad has been made on the unbroken ramparts of the Greek Church. The only exceptions are those congregations which have entered into alliance with the Church of Rome—and their number is inconsiderable—and the still fewer members of the Protestant body. It is impossible here to overlook the fact that, though misunderstood and sadly misapplied, just as in the case of Spain, the strong desire to preserve the national unity has been a powerful obstacle in the way of religious reform. Scarcely a single intelligent Greek can be found who will deny that there is much in the service of the Church and the popular religion calling for urgent reform; but, like similar parties before the Reformation, they reserve all interference till the assembling of a General Council in Constantinople, under the sanction of the restored Greek Empire. And thus they reconcile themselves to things as they are. A few have arisen of late, however, who feel that, whatever may be the probability or improbability of effecting any general reform, they must themselves, without delay, testify to the truth of the gospel, and 'worship God in spirit and in truth,' whatever sacrifice it may involve. It is to these the Christian looks with hope and faith."

In reference to education, in which some little progress has been made, it is said—"Since 1832, there has existed, in connection with almost every Greek Church, a Lancasterian school, for the education of boys and young girls in the elementary branches of useful knowledge. The standard aimed at, however, in these schools is by no means high; and, particularly in regard to girls, their attendance is limited to so short a period, that the attainments made can hardly be said to exceed those of 'infant scholars' in Britain. I need scarcely add, that education is not yet studied as a science, and that no exertions worth mentioning are made to secure properly qualified teachers. These schools are also supported by the population of their respective districts, though generally from a fund distinct from that allotted to the support of the clergy, and attendance is quite free. The parish schoolmaster must be approved by the patriarch. Besides these parish schools, there are a few separate girls' schools; but we regret to say that female education has made as yet but little progress, though we have no doubt that, in this respect, the Greeks are foremost

of the populations of Turkey. Among the richer classes, its importance is, however, daily becoming more felt, and not a few families have British governesses. Besides these, which are also free, there are fifteen schools for the study of ancient Greek, and several Lyceums for the study of French and of the sciences, and in some cases of English; for the latter, teachers of considerable ability are sometimes secured: they are supported, like all the others, out of the funds of the community, and attendance is free, though for the higher departments of education the parent is expected to pay something additional, if he can. In addition to all these, there are, lastly, several private seminaries established by rich and generally enlightened men, who have the direction in their own hands, and are practically independent of all authority. The Directors of the Bible and Religious Depository in Pera were lately agreeably surprised with a demand from one of these schools for a considerable number of New Testaments in modern Greek, the managers of the school having resolved to introduce it as a text-book. Attendance at these schools is, of course, not free. This leads me to mention, that by no ecumenical or general enactment that I am aware of, has the Greek Church prohibited the perusal of the Word of God by the common people in the vernacular tongue. This is an important point of contrast with the Church of Rome, as everybody knows; and even in later times, though the decisions of synods have sometimes been adverse to the circulation of the Scriptures, they have more frequently been favourable. At this very moment, the translation of the Old and New Testament into modern Greek, is used as a school-book in all the parish schools of the Kingdom of Greece, while the very same book was anathematized twenty years ago by the Holy Synod. Something might now be expected to be said in reference to the theological seminary established some years ago; but its influence has been literally nothing, or at least inappreciable."

The following interesting statistics are given of the numbers of different divisions of the subjects of the Porte in European Turkey, communicated to the editor of the same work by the Secretary of the Turkish Missions' Aid Society:—"According to the best and most recent statistics* existing, European Turkey (to which we must look particularly, as it will doubtless most seriously affect, if not wholly decide, the fate of the whole) contains the following tribes and religious sects, viz.:—Osmanlees, 1,055,000; Slavonic tribes, 7,700,000; Wallachians, 4,300,000; Albanians, 1,600,000; Greeks, 1,050,000; Armenians, Jews, Tartars, and Gipsies, 380,000. The Slavonic tribes, now a particular object of interest to the Christian no less than to the statesman, are subdivided as follows, viz.:—Bulgarians, 4,500,000; Servians, 1,500,000; Bosnians and Greeks, 1,450,000; others, 250,000—7,700,000. In religion, about one-fourth are professed Mahometans; of the remaining three-fourths, about 650,000 are Catholics, 125,000 Jews, and 10,080,000 Greeks or reputed Greeks, showing a large preponderance of the latter, and consequently to Russian influence. Should this majority gain the political control

* See Von Reden, *Die Türkei und Griechenland*, &c.

in the country, the Mahometans—the Mahometans averse to anything like idolatry—may flee across the water into Asia to escape. The Protestant would soon find himself recklessly oppressed.”

As to the adherents of the Papacy in Turkey, this writer says—“But neither are the Catholics without some serious advantages in Turkey, and they will not be slow in turning them dexterously to advantage. Although they are numerically weak, their clergy and their laity are superior in intelligence to the Greek priests and people. Turkey has a common boundary with Austria for 1260 miles; France has access by water; most of the embassies and legations of the capital, most of the consulates in the country, are in the hands of the Catholics; nearly all the dragomans of the embassies (even the Protestant embassies) are Catholics, and the influence of these men is great, even to the second and third rate dragomans. The Catholics have monasteries and nunneries training labourers for the field, and pecuniary means for all their measures, and the name of the Jesuits is legion; and while the hands of the Greek hierarchy are being strengthened by Russia, the Jesuits have Austria, and particularly France, for their protectors and supporters in every time of need.”

From other sources of information, we learn that in the Turkish empire the clergy of the Greek Church receive, according to law, a contribution annually from each family of their own communion for the decent maintenance of public worship, besides the perquisites mentioned above; and, further, that the taxes paid to government are apportioned among the Greek population, not by Mahometan officers, but by their own archbishops and bishops. Further, the patriarch of Constantinople is the chief of the Greek communities. He, along with twelve metropolitans, who, under his presidency, compose the synod, or grand counsel, is the sovereign judge, without interference on the part of the Sultan, not only of religious matters, but also in civil matters among the Christians, and they are exempted from certain taxes. Besides the patriarchs of Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, there are thirty-two archbishops and one hundred and forty bishops, whose revenues are drawn from these public contributions. There are also in the empire about two and a half millions of Armenians, among whom very interesting missionary work has been now for many years in progress, chiefly by the instrumentality of American agency, and a number of Protestant congregations are in the course of formation. To speak of these, however, is not the object of this paper.

THE RUSSO-GREEK CHURCH.*

This church extends throughout a large portion of the Russian empire. It once had a patriarch of its own, but this office was abolished by Peter the Great, and the Church brought completely under the do-

* For the greater part of the particulars regarding the condition of the Russo-Greek Church, we are indebted to an able article in the March number of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* for 1854, written, as we are given to understand, by a gentleman who had the best means of ascertaining the truth of the things which he states with much care and minuteness.

minion of the Czar, who exercises a despotic sway in the Church as well as in the State. It is true that the supreme ecclesiastical authority is ostensibly lodged in what is called the Holy Synod. This Synod ordinarily consists of the metropolitan of St Petersburg, the archbishops, a bishop, the Emperor's confessor, an archimandrite (one degree lower than a bishop), the chaplain-general of the naval and military forces, and an archpriest. The president of this Synod is always a layman—who is generally some high military functionary—the representative of the Emperor, whose *veto* can suspend, or even annul, the most solemn resolutions of Synod, even when unanimously adopted. Not only is the Synod thus controlled by a military chief, but its constituent members may be increased or reduced according to the pleasure of the Czar; and as any one of these ecclesiastics may at any time be deprived of his place and standing by the Emperor with a word, they must never dare to express an opinion, or give utterance to a word or thought at variance with his wishes. The very forms of the edicts of this court show that they have no independent action, but are the exponents of the will of the Czar; as the perpetual dictator of all their decrees. They are invariably headed with this *formula*—“By the most high will, command, and conformably to the sublime wishes of his Majesty,” &c. &c. And this subjection to the will of the despotic civil ruler extends not merely to matters of administration in the appointment of office-bearers, but also to discipline and worship.

In one thing the law of this church is the very reverse of what obtains in the Romish community. Marriage is a primary and indispensable condition of the priesthood; and, moreover, the death of the wife, unless where a special dispensation is accorded by the Synod or Emperor, involves not only the loss of his sacerdotal functions, but completely annuls the priestly character. The widowed priest, bishop, or pastor, returns to a lay condition from that moment. He may become a field labourer, a mechanic, or a soldier of the Caucasus, but he ceases for ever to officiate as a minister of religion.

The inferior clergy throughout the Russian empire, who do the work in their respective parishes, have only a miserable pittance of support; their houses are wooden huts, nothing superior to that of the poorest parishioners, and the portion of land attached is cultivated by their own hands. They acquire habits and indulge in practices tending to degrade them in the eyes of the people, and render them objects of contempt rather than esteem. And, as might be expected, their qualifications for the duties of their office are of the lowest order. Though it is not to be expected that discipline in such a state of matters will be any other than lax, in one year (1836) upwards of two thousand ecclesiastics were degraded for crimes or offences—not a few of which were of the basest kind. When this is the character of their spiritual instructors and guides, what can that of the masses of the people be expected to be? And while this is the condition of the inferior ecclesiastics, the highest dignitaries of the church have not only small means of outward support, but are the abject slaves of the Emperor, who, through the Synod, as his passive agent, can deprive the highest ecclesiastic in the empire of his office, and degrade him to

a lay condition at his pleasure, so that the metropolitan, archbishop, or bishop who would retain his mitre has no other choice left than to be the zealous and docile agent of the Autocrat.

"The Bible," says Bunsen, in his "Signs of the Times," 1855, "is everywhere banished; not a single Slavonic Bible has been printed in this gigantic empire since the year 1826, and that in a church which never made a principle of excluding it. No foreign mission even among the Mahometans is allowed; while the Russian Church herself does not pretend ever to have made any conversions among the heathen without the help of the bayonet and the dram-shop."

One remarkable phase of the state of the Christian population in the Russian empire—if this deserves the name of Christian—is the existence of an almost endless variety of sects, each for its own reasons disowning the church which has the sanction of the State, notwithstanding the iron sway with which the despotic sceptre of the Czar is wielded over ecclesiastical society. Though these different parties have again and again been subjected to relentless persecutions, it has been found impossible to put them down. And such are the numbers belonging to some of these sects, that the government is influenced by their sentiments in the measures which they adopt. It is cause of deep sorrow, however, that these different sections of non-conformists in the Russian empire are all in a state of degradation and corruption in principle and practice, corresponding to, and, in some cases, worse than those of the church from which they are separated; and that there does not seem to be so much as one section in which intelligent views of Bible doctrine or scriptural order and worship prevail.

This is a very dark picture of the religious condition of this vast empire. The Pope, with all his tyranny, does not rule over Romish ecclesiastics with greater rigour than the Czar does over those in his dominions; nor are the subjects of the one despot more debased than those of the other. No enlightened lover of mankind can desire the continuance of the one system or the other. Both systems tend to foster and perpetuate ignorance, immorality, and temporal misery, apart from the delusions as to a future state which they cherish and propagate. It is manifest, also, that the professed zeal of the Russian Emperor about the protection of the Greek Christians in the Turkish empire must have been a mere pretence, and that he had very different objects which he sought to obtain in the late war against Turkey from the promotion of the rights and liberty of this class of the subjects of the Sultan. Undoubtedly, whatever abuses exist and are tolerated in the administration of the Ottoman empire, the condition of the adherents of the Greek Church in that empire, both in their civil and religious aspects, is far more tolerable than those enjoy who are under the protection, or rather who are crushed under the heel, of the tyrannic sway of the Russian Autocrat. And it is through the faults of the superior ecclesiastics in the Greek Church themselves that the condition of her adherents in the Turkish empire is not in all respects better than it now is, seeing the administration both in civil and spiritual things is by law so much in the hands of the bishops.

THE CREATIVE WEEK.*

WHAT gives special interest to the subject of this work is, that it contains a very able and thorough exposure and refutation of theories regarding the meaning of the words employed by the Spirit in the Mosaic record of creation, which, though not designed by their authors and abettors, indirectly affect the very foundation of our faith and hope as Christians. These hypotheses, dogmatically announced by some, as if they had been established beyond reasonable controversy, and holding up all who gainsay them to opprobrium, do not, it is admitted, strike against any of the received doctrines of revelation relating either to faith or practice; but they so distort the medium by which the great Author of our being has been pleased to exhibit the truth to be believed in this part of the Bible, that, were the same process extended to other parts of Scripture (and who will say that it may not?†) a dense cloud of doubt would be thrown over the assurance with which it is our privilege to be blessed as to the most vital truths of our holy religion. For if it be so that we have been in grievous error about the sense in which the Spirit has employed the plainest terms of language in the simplest use of these—that of narration,—and with adjuncts which show, as we thought, and all the laws of language and interpretation demand, that they are to be understood in their common acceptance, what assurance can we have that we have not still more egregiously erred in the meaning which we have ascribed to the language employed by the Spirit where the style is far less simple, and in which the sense of the words employed, though clear enough, do not admit of being established by so many lines of irrefragable evidence.

The more subtle the form in which doubts are insinuated that the words employed by the Spirit may be designed to express a meaning almost infinitely different from that in which they are ordinarily used, and without any intimation that they are so used, the more dangerous it is, and the more does it tend to shake our confidence in the possibility of being assured that we know the mind of God, made known in his Word. Nor is the danger lessened, but increased, by the fact that it is by the friends of religion and of the Bible that these insinuations are made. Our minds at once recoil from the daring assaults of the German Neologist on the foundations of our faith, when he represents the histori-

* *The Creative Week: being a Secular Exposition of the Mosaic Record of Creation.* By the Author of "Commentaries on the Georgics of Virgil," and other Works. Edinburgh: Maclachlan & Stewart; London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co.; Perth: James Dewar & Son. 1856.

† We have a lamentable instance of a similar interpretation of the language of the Spirit, as to other subjects, in the Chevalier Bunsen's late elaborate work, entitled "God in History," now extensively circulating on the Continent, with a translation of which into English we are threatened; and we have too much reason to fear that its circulation in Britain will be extensive, and greatly add to the pernicious results which German writings of a similar nature have already produced. It is one of the dark signs of the times, that a writer so talented, who was expected to be the instrument of so much good, should be devoting the evening of his days to the promulgation of Neology in some of its worst phases.

cal parts of Scripture, which we firmly believe to be an infallible narrative of events, as a succession of allegories; and what we hold to be a statement of facts, as only so many well devised and expressed fables. We are aroused to a sense of imminent danger when we witness the promulgation of false theories of inspiration, which, were they true, would leave us wholly unable to know or say what part of the Bible is the writing of erring man and what the dictate of the Spirit of God—what we are to receive as the instruction of unerring Wisdom and what as the mere opinions or conclusions of an imperfect, fallible creature like ourselves. But we are thrown off our guard when parties, who are undeniably the honest friends of the Bible, in the exuberance of their zeal, and an overweening confidence in their own penetration and sagacity, suggest dangerous theories of interpreting the language of Scripture, with the laudable object of obviating a threatened collision between the long received meaning of certain parts of the inspired record and the discoveries of science, in which they are known to have reached very high attainments.

We are so intoxicated, too, with the amazing progress which has been made in various branches of science and in the arts in our times, that we are in danger of falsely persuading ourselves that there is scope for corresponding progress in religion, and of new discoveries in this highest of all sciences; and if we do not profess to look for a new Bible, we would either have a new interpretation put on the meaning of its terms, or, with the Socinian and the Pantheist, have a transcendentalism concocted by our own imaginary soaring intelligence, as the mould into which revelation itself must be cast, and by which it must be judged. Such is undoubtedly one of the tendencies of our times, and the smallest germs of this spirit, as well as the more full development, are to be dreaded, watched against, and strenuously resisted. The impressions which the talented writer of this book has of this tendency of the minds of men in the present time are briefly expressed in his concise preface. His words are—

“Divines and geologists have been so long accustomed to entertain and foster such lofty, transcendental conceptions about the Mosaic history of creation, that they may be disposed to regard the plain, simple, unambitious illustration of it, contained in this work, no elucidation at all—anything but correct, anything but satisfactory. These learned men may feel as if the subject of creation had been shorn of its chief interest and attractions—as if the work of the Almighty Creator had been robbed of half its greatness and half its glory; and the sacred author Moses brought down almost to a level with ordinary historians. Well: after indulging themselves a reasonable time with these reflections, let them next set about disposing of the host of evidence and arguments which the author has advanced in support of his interpretations.”

The author of the work before us is a gentleman whose erudition is unquestionably of no mean order—who has apparently devoted himself to philology as one of his special studies, and gives evidence in these pages, as well as in his other writings, that he is indeed a master in this department of learning. He has also made himself thoroughly acquainted with the science of geology, so that he is prepared to combat those whose theories he exposes with their own weapons. We are glad to see that our author's knowledge of the Scriptures is

so extensive and accurate, and that he appears to be thoroughly conversant with theology, as a system.

This volume contains an elaborate and exhaustive critical exposition of the inspired record of creation, viewed especially in relation to science. One special object of the work is to demonstrate philologically that the term day, as employed in the Mosaic history of creation, *must be* understood literally; in other words, that the six days of creation, spoken of by Moses, and the seventh day, on which God rested, are ordinary days of twenty-four hours. In the prosecution of his argument, our author very ably meets and exposes the pleas of the late Hugh Miller in his *Geology*, and of others, who insist that in this part of Scripture the term day is to be interpreted as denoting a period of immense duration, which our author, for the sake of rendering it a definite period of time, assumes to be forty thousand years.

In all our author's theories, in relation to the controverted subjects which are suggested or stated in the "Creative Week," we are not prepared to concur; and we could have wished that in some cases these had been announced in less positive terms, being at most only what may be accounted in a high degree probable. As an instance of this, we refer to what is once and again stated as to the *extent* of the flood, with which the tertiary period closed, as limited to Asia. But our sentiments entirely coincide with those expressed in this work in its two main objects, viz.—1st, In reference to the sense in which the first verse of the book of Genesis is to be understood, namely, as a summary statement regarding that great work, the details of which are given in the succeeding part of the chapter, corresponding to the summing up which follows in the first verse of the second chapter, in these words—"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them; and 2d, That the creative week consisted of literal days of twenty-four hours each. These two positions the author of this work has established by a force of evidence and power of argument which we think are unanswerable; and we are greatly mistaken if any one will soon have the fool-hardihood seriously to attempt to meet his reasoning on this subject.

In the course of his exposition and argument, our author furnishes us with some specimens of very satisfactory criticism, and exposes, with well-merited severity, the very flagrant neglect of the first laws of interpretation, of which divines and others have been guilty, in advocating their rashly adopted theories as to the meaning of the part of Scripture under review. He shows, for instance, that the term "earth," unless when used more or less figuratively, uniformly denotes the dry land, or the earth in a solid state—"God called the dry land earth;" that "heaven" in this passage is again and again employed to denote the atmosphere, and not the heavens, as including the celestial orbs, which are spoken of distinctly by themselves, as sun, moon, and stars; that "day" is employed here to denote day as distinguished from night—"the light God called day, and the darkness he called night," or a period of twenty-four hours, including day and night, or "the evening and the morning." He also makes very striking and effective use of the words of the Apostle, Heb. xi.

3—"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." This passage, he contends, does not refer to the creation of all things at first out of nothing—the contrast being not between existent and non-existent things, to express which the use of different terms would have been necessary, but between things visible to our senses and things invisible, or not apparent or discernible by our organs of vision.

In this passage he shows that the language of inspiration is found harmonizing with the conclusions of science, inasmuch as it intimates that worlds first exist in a gaseous state, and it is known that the material substances of globes, even the hardest, as the diamond, are capable of being converted into an invisible gas; and secondly, that what is revealed to our faith, and therefore seen by faith, in the light of the inspired history of creation in Genesis, does not, and cannot, refer to the creation of all worlds out of matter in a nebular state, but merely to the preparation of this world to be the abode of mankind.

Had our space permitted, we could willingly have given quotations furnishing proof of the power with which the vagaries of some divines are dealt with who have been forward to adopt the suggestions of those who sought to reconcile science and revelation, by interpreting the days of the creative week as long periods of immense duration. But we hasten to furnish our readers with some specimens of our author's argument as to the main subject in this controversy—the length of the days spoken of in the Mosaic history of creation.

"One reason," says our author, "why Moses was directed to use the phrase, 'the evening and the morning,' to denote a natural day, appears to have been because it was the custom of the Jews so to reckon time, and to them first were to be committed the Oracles of God. Another prospective reason may have been, to prevent all ambiguity, and make the meaning obvious to the most common discernment. The word day is occasionally employed to signify a short period of time—several days—a month—a year, or even more—it is never used, however, to denote a very long period. But the length and peculiarity of 'the evening and the morning' would prevent it from being ever so employed; and, for a Jew to mistake that phrase in the record of creation, more especially as 'day' is united with it every time it occurs there, may be pronounced an impossibility. Further: it is a somewhat remarkable circumstance connected with that phrase, that, though the custom which gave rise to it continued in force during the whole time the Jews remained a collective people in Palestine, 'the evening and the morning' occurs nowhere else in the whole Bible. 'The evening and the morning' is too unwieldy and inconvenient a phrase ever to come into general use; and expressions not of current application in the ordinary intercourse of life seldom obtain in history. As the inspired authors are remarkable for propriety in the use of language, one reason why they did not employ 'the evening and the morning' in their narratives may have been, that it was little, if at all, used in the common affairs of life. And, when we find the use of it in its plain, simple acceptation so rare, we may conclude with certainty, that it never came into use in a figurative sense. Indeed, it may be questioned if such an expression as 'the evening and the morning,' especially with 'day' to explain the sense in which it is used, could have a figurative meaning given to it; for, if the 'evening and the morning' were figuratively employed, so also must 'day' be. Now, who ever heard of a figurative expression being made use of to illustrate another figurative expression, more especially in a simple narrative like the record of creation, and no intimation given that the words are not employed in their ordinary and proper significations? But, unless both expressions be figurative, the clause cannot be explained of any period of time longer than a natural day."

"It would never occur to the Jews, that the author of the book of Genesis, himself a Jew, would ever employ words in any other acceptation than what every Jew, himself included, had always been accustomed to attach to them. Had a modern geologist, one of the *a posteriori* class,* appeared *proleptically* among them, and said, that, from reading 'sermons in stones,' he had made the discovery that the phrase, 'the evening and the morning,' signified a period of time forty thousand years in length, they would have thought him possessed (in the scriptural sense of the term), and would have gazed on him in silent bewilderment, expecting every moment to see him rend his own clothes and tear his own flesh." . . . "However, let us for a little calmly consider what consequences must follow from understanding the words as the *a posteriori* men interpret them. When applied to a natural day, 'the evening' means a period of uninterrupted darkness, and 'the morning' a period of continuous light—not the mere commencement of these periods, as some have attempted to show, for the phrase 'the evening and the morning' denotes the whole twenty-four hours of a day. Now, if we are to understand these words as alluding to a geological period (a thing which neither Moses nor any other Jew in the Old Testament times ever heard of), it must still preserve the analogy to a natural day, as regards the darkness and the light: the dark period† must precede the light period, and be dark throughout, as in a natural night; and the light period follow, and be light throughout, as in a natural day. This gives us twenty thousand years, during which our planet is enveloped in thick darkness, which the rays of the sun never once penetrate and interrupt; and, after this dark cycle has run its course, other twenty thousand years, during which it is encompassed, ever and at all hours, with light that never fades, is never broken—the world all night for twenty thousand years—all day for other twenty thousand! Now, how is this alternation of darkness and light to be effected? The blotting out of the light of the sun would be an effectual mode of causing darkness all over the globe, and moreover involve the whole planetary system in the thickest night. But where are we to find the means of maintaining universal day for so long a period? This must be accomplished by a reverse of the process by which we bring on the darkness: instead of no sun, or only one, it would require at least six: two at the equator, twelve hours distant from each other, to keep out night from the torrid and temperate zones; two more at the arctic, and two at the antarctic, circles, to join the light coming from the equatorial suns on each side, north and south—the suns of each pair equally distant from one another—to shut out darkness from these cold ice-bound regions, on to either pole. What a glorious sight these six suns must have been! What would a Newton, or a La Place, or a Herschel, not have given to have but once opened their scientific eyes on such a sublime spectacle? Must we take it upon trust, that the mastodons, the megatheriums, and the many other monsters of the bygone periods, had six suns to direct their unwieldy steps through the jungles and through the waters—and that man, the lord of the world, has been reduced to one. The dark period would be a period of death and utter desolation, not to our globe only, but to the whole planetary system."

"Again: we are at no loss at all about the reason why God divided the work of creation into six natural days. God himself, in the Fourth Commandment, has assigned a reason for this procedure—"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." This reason is at once plain, simple, and satisfactory; it requires the application of neither geometry nor algebra to understand it, in the sense in which it was meant to be understood. An explanation of the reason in the commandment, which needs the help of *plus* and *minus* to render it intelligible, whilst it shocks our common sense, carries in the face of it an argument more than sufficient for its own refutation. What did Moses or the Jews know about algebra? If a knowledge of algebra was necessary for rightly understanding the reason in the commandment, that reason must have remained a dead letter, not to the Old Testa-

* Those who hold that the term day in this part of Scripture signifies a long period of some myriads of years.

† "Mr Miller makes repeated use of 'the evening' and 'the morning,' in evident allusion to the Mosiac phrase, 'the evening and the morning;' but he always puts 'the morning' before 'the evening,' no doubt deeming it an improvement upon the way in which Moses arranges the words. It would thus appear that the primitive Hebrew is as notorious for the laxity of its compositions as for 'the laxity of its terms'" (with the latter of which it was charged by Hugh Miller).

ment Jews only, but to every one of the human race who never applied that science to the commandment—that is, to all mankind, with the exception of one or two interested and deeply prejudiced geologists. From the hour in which the commandments were delivered from the top of Mount Sinai down to the present day, the common sense of mankind has led them to understand 'day' and 'days' in the Fourth Commandment as meaning natural days, because such everywhere is the common import of the word, whether in the singular or the plural, unless where the context clearly points out that a somewhat longer period of time is intended; and no such specification appears in the commandment. But geologists show far greater disregard of the laws of language than the most illiterate among us do for the facts of geology." "When geologists contend for the days of the Mosaic record being long periods, they are utterly blind to the pernicious consequences of the headstrong course they are pursuing. Were it possible for them to succeed in proving the days of the record to be long periods, instead of producing harmony between that piece of history and the researches of geology, as the periods of the record would not agree in one essential point with the periods of the strata, the inevitable result would be, either the Mosaic record was not genuine and authentic, or that the findings of geologists were unfounded and false; and men would be at a loss to know which to believe and which to disbelieve. On the contrary, when, in obedience to the dictates of philology, we view the days of the record as natural days of twenty-four hours each, the fullest agreement and harmony are found to exist between the statements of Moses and the facts of geology."

In his eagerness to establish his dogmas as to the days of creation being periods of immense duration, Hugh Miller, in opposition to the general opinion of geologists themselves, shifted his ground in his later publications, and, instead of the long-boasted *six* geological periods, reduced these to *three*, and will have the human period to be a continuation of the tertiary, formerly held to correspond to the fifth day. In opposition to this part of Dr Miller's theory, our author says—

"The universal belief of naturalists in the total extinction of the animals of the tertiary period is in full harmony with the declarations of Scripture. Mr Miller's opinion, however, runs counter to both the findings of science and the truths of inspiration; and it rests with him to prove that 'several even of the wild animals, which continue to survive amid our tracts of hill and forest, were in existence many ages ere the human age began.' That there were animals during the tertiary period of the same sort and name with some of our own animals cannot be denied; but it cannot be satisfactorily shown that these animals of ours are the actual descendants of animals that lived in the tertiary period—that is the point to be proved."

The attempt of Hugh Miller to meet the difficulty of the sad discrepancies between the character of the trees, herbs, and plants of the Mosaic record of creation and those in the geologic strata, by ascribing this to the poverty of the Hebrew language, and its consequent incapacity to give a distinct description of these, is met, and its groundlessness shown in the most masterly style, of which we can give only one short specimen—

"Had all the plants of the Mosaic record corresponded to the plants of the paleozoic epoch, Mr Miller would have had no fault to find with the primitive Hebrew. To ascribe the discordance between the two sets of plants to a defect in that language is both arrogant and presumptuous. Longinus, a great critic and philosopher, held the writings of Moses in high esteem and admiration. In the narrative of creation particularly he saw much to commend, but nothing deserving of blame. It was in the primitive Hebrew that Solomon wrote about plants—from the cedars of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall. It was in the primitive Hebrew that the author of the book of Job (supposed to be Moses himself) wrote such noble descriptions of the peacock, the stork, the ostrich, the hawk, the eagle—among birds; and

among beasts—of the hind, the wild goat, the wild ass, the unicorn, and, above all, of the war horse. As popular descriptions, these have never been equalled, far less surpassed, in any language—whether primitive or derivative—simple or mixed—ancient or modern. The Old Testament, composed in the primitive Hebrew, teems with the most beautiful, the most pathetic, the grandest, the most sublime, delineations, in both prose and verse, ever written. Were the Old Testament remarkable and valuable for nothing else but the high and varied artistic excellencies displayed in its composition, it would still be a wonderful book."

We must conclude this notice by giving one or two extracts containing an exposure of Hugh Miller's views as to the Sabbath.

"Mr Miller," says our author, "in his unsuccessful attempt to show that the seventh day is a long period, says 'God may be resting still. The presumption is strong that his sabbath is an extended period, and not a natural day, and that the work of redemption is his sabbath day's work.' (Geol., p. 20.) If he had said—The *assumption* is strong, he would have expressed a truth. A strong presumption must have something to create it—something to support it, and make it credible. Moses speaks of the first sabbath in several parts of his writings, and St Paul quotes one of the passages where he does so; but there is nothing in any one of these places which would lead us to infer that it was a long period—nothing that would justify us in asserting that God did any work in it; the presumption and the evidence are all strong in favour of its being a natural day—during the whole of which the Creator rested, after the work of the previous six days."

"'God may be resting still.' This is exactly the sort of language we might expect from one who, in settling the meaning of a passage of Scripture, speaks of cutting the philological knot. Thus to represent as doubtful a state and a time which are repeatedly, and in the most unqualified manner, affirmed in Scripture to be past, is quite a novelty in grammar; and, if followed universally, would confound all history, and all our knowledge of past events in this world. According to this new and strange *grammatology*, every event throughout the whole Scriptures that is stated, in absolute terms, to be past, may still be going on, and far from being completed. This surely is cutting the philological knot with a vengeance!

"Gen. i. 2. 'The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.'

"Now, according to the new mode of interpretation, which sets both grammar and logic at defiance, the Spirit of God may be moving on the face of the waters still.

"Gen. viii. 1. 'God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters were assuaged.'

"On the same novel principle, the wind may be passing over the earth still, and the waters of the Universal Deluge may not yet all have returned to the great deep.

"Exod. iii. 1. 'Moses kept the flock of Jethro.'

"Moses, with a shepherd's crook in his hand, and shepherd's shoes on his feet, may be keeping the flock of Jethro still.

"One advantage which this new mode of interpretation holds out is, that events thicken as the world grows older; and, if we had only the faculty of vision and discernment required, we would see everything that happened in the past ages of the world—from the beginning down to our own time—going on before our eyes.

"'The work of redemption may, I repeat, be the work of God's sabbath-day.' Mr Miller here assumes two things, for which he has no authority whatever: first, that the rest which God took on the seventh day was work; next, that the work done on that day was the work of redemption. This confounding of rest with work, besides contradicting the express declarations of Scripture, destroys the first and fundamental idea of a sabbath-day."

We cannot refrain from adding one brief extract yet on this subject.

"To make 'rested' apply to the work of redemption, is not only to confound rest with work, but time past with time future, and, moreover, to make the first sabbath synchronous with the whole of the human period, for that is the time in which God carries on the work of redemption.

"It is almost needless to say that there is nothing whatever, either in the Mosaic

account of creation, or in any other passage of Scripture, which gives the least countenance to such wild and heterodox interpretations, whose direct and sole tendency is to throw ridicule on the pages of revelation."

It is not necessary to say that we earnestly wish this work an extensive circulation. The great talent and energy by which it is characterized—the remarkable success with which the author overthrows the positions of his powerful antagonists, and the convincing evidence by which he establishes his own in their leading lines, give the "Creative Week" an unquestionable claim to public attention. We do not, however, predict that it will in the meantime be popular. It has too much learning for a numerous class of readers, and it has a vast amount of prejudice to contend against with another class, who have, without thinking or examining the subject for themselves, adopted the theories of certain parties of great name both in the church and in the world of science. We would suggest to such as have given a willing ear to the arguments adduced on one side of this question, commended as they have been by great beauty of diction, as well as high intellectual skill, the ancient adage, "*audi alteram partem*" (hear both sides). There is, however, no cause for despair—*magna est veritas, et prevalebis* (truth is mighty, and will triumph). It will do so at length, however long error may prevail.

We are sorry to find that though Hugh Miller—the indefatigable and powerful advocate of the theory that the days of creation are to be understood as periods of immense duration—had seen the position which he assumed in defence of this view once and again to be untenable, he still clung to his hypothesis, and spent his last hours in endeavouring to commend it by a new phase of argument. The tragic end of this great and justly lamented man, as well as the fascination of style of which he was such a master, will no doubt give an impulse to what we hold to be the wrong side of this question. And as his last work, "The Testimony of the Rocks" (which we intend to notice in a subsequent number), has had such an extensive circulation, both on this and the other side of the Atlantic, it is desirable that the "Creative Week" should also find its way to America, as well as have a wide circulation in Britain.

OUTLINE OF A SERMON BY THE LATE MR STURROCK.

John x. 10—"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

THE coming of Christ was the greatest event that ever occurred on the earth. Vast were the preparations made for it. History, prophecy, and poetry, were all employed ages before, in stating the preparatory circumstances, in foretelling the great event, and in celebrating the blessings which would accrue to man, as consequences. It is the central event in God's providence. There must have been some singular reason for such an appearance on God's part—a reason

worthy of the Eternal Mind. The final cause of all Jehovah's proceedings must be one and the same in all cases—the manifestation and promotion of His own glory. But we dare not say that it was simply for display that Christ *came*. The Word, as generally used among men, is utterly inapplicable to the most high God. Nor was it only and exclusively for manifesting His glory: it was manifested in a certain way, not only by God dwelling upon earth, and in flesh, which of itself was passing wonderful, but by having a high, and holy, and generous purpose to effect by this particular appearance. "I am come," says the text, "that they might have life."

And was this the design of God becoming man? Do we really stand in need of life? Have we not life? Are we not moving, rational, intellectual, moral agents? Am I not, says the young man, in possession of life, yea, of the very life of life? My athletic frame, my joyous heart, my strong imagination, my fine feelings, all betoken the richness and the strength of my life. Am I not, says the philosopher, alive? My senses are keen; my moral judgment is under high command; my powers of investigation are unimpaired by patient examination, by logical precision, by wise discrimination; I testify a life more abundant than that of many of my race. Notwithstanding all this confident boasting, it is obvious that we are all *dead, condemned* men. Upon what other supposition could the Saviour declare that the purpose of his advent was to give his people *life*. In the preceding part of this verse, He represents those who thrust themselves into the Church, and who, instead of feeding the people with knowledge, only distract their exercise and ruin their souls, as thieves and robbers. These were not the servants of the most high God that showed unto men the way of salvation. But, says Christ, "*I am come that ye might have life.*"

The following questions demand our consideration:—

- I. As to the *coming* of Christ.
- II. As to His *giving* life to His people.
- III. As to *whom* He gives life.
- IV. As to the kind of life conferred.
- V. As to how it is more abundant.

I. 1st, Christ came from heaven to earth. In the refulgence of eternal glory had the Saviour resided; He tabernacled not in the highest heaven, but it was his dwelling-place from the unbegun ages of eternity. There was He by the Father, as one brought up with him. They dwelt not simply as friends—inseparable friends—but as one in nature and one in essence; as two persons in one undivided and indivisible Godhead. But He came to our sinful world—He travelled through the immensity that intervened—He came upon our planet not on a visit of examination, but on a mission of love. Who came? God. Had any of the seraphs around the throne come to us and spoken of God's love, it would have been much; but the Lord of angels came. They would have come at the command of another; Christ came voluntarily. They would have come from happiness and glory, conferred on them as creatures; but He came from His native, necessary, and essential glory—the place from which He never had been

absent—the place where it never could be said He began to dwell. What a journey! From the bosom of His Father to a manger in Bethlehem; from swaying the sceptre of universal dominion to submit to the commands of a carpenter; from the heavenly paradise to the garden of agony; from the hallelujahs of angels to the scorn of malefactors; from a throne of independent glory to the gloom of a borrowed grave.

2d, He came according to an everlasting agreement. He had been thinking from eternity about coming to our world,—the salvation of sinners had long occupied His thoughts; to engage Himself to the Godlike work He entered into a covenant with His Father. They entered into this covenant by mutual agreement. You all know the conditions and the promises of this covenant. The perfect obedience, and the satisfactory death of Christ, and the salvation of a great multitude, whom no man can number, of Adam's ruined family. It was therefore in pursuance of this covenant that Christ came.

3d, He came at the fulness of time. This was the time fixed on in the annals of eternity—a time fully fitted for His appearance—a time when the futility of any other method of salvation was fully proved—a time when the ancient ceremonial was fully developed—a time when the prophecies that went before concerning Him were fully accomplished—a time when it was fully shown that the world by wisdom knew not God. The year of the world 4000 was the time appointed. What if that was the central year of the world! What if Christ came to divide the two grand eras of mortal existence! If so, then we are within 160 years of the half of the second division. This may be, and likely is, fancy; but we have grounds for faith when we say, in the language of Scripture, in the fulness of time God sent forth His Son, born of a woman.

4th, Christ came in human nature. This is the mystery, brethren. God is everywhere—in the depths of hell and in the heights of heaven. If Christ had come only in His divine nature, it could scarcely have been called a coming, because he never was absent from the earth in His divinity. He made it, He preserved it; but He came clothed in flesh, He came visibly; He was born, He was nursed, He grew in stature, and in favour with God and man; without controversy great is the mystery of godliness—God manifest in flesh. If He had come in any other way He could not have given life; He behoved to have a life to give for the life of the people. As the children, therefore, were partakers of flesh and blood, so He himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy death. He was *manifested* to take away sin. It was a peculiar manifestation. He manifests His glory as God in all things; but He could only be manifested to *take away sin* by assuming human nature—not the nature of angels, but of men. He came, therefore, and He went again to His throne, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; wherefore He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

II. 1st, Christ gives life by showing us how we are to obtain it. This is the great question which every one, alive in any degree as to the interests of his soul, will be most anxious about. How man should

have his lost life restored, is a question which only revelation can answer. Now, Christ came as a prophet to point the way to immortality and eternal life. "I am," says He, "the way, the truth, and the life." He truly brought life and immortality to light. "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Hearer, reader, believest thou that? "I am the resurrection and the life."

2d, He gives life, as He purchased it, for His people. Wondrous strange that the Lord of life should purchase back the life of those who were rebels to His government! But so He did. He gave His life a ransom to be testified in due time. Life for life was the condition, and the Saviour agreed to it. The price was poured forth all price beyond. It were strange to believe, if not more strange to disbelieve.

3d, He came *actually* to confer life. He did not merely reveal life, and purchase life, but He conferred life. "I give unto them eternal life." The words I speak they are spirit and they are life. They that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.

III. It was that His own people might have life that Christ came. That *they* might have life. Who are *they*? His sheep, who know His voice. "I lay down my life for the sheep." If life for life was the condition of eternal life, then, of course, the promise of the covenant will be performed in the case of all those in whose room Christ died, or for whom He gave His life.

IV. As to the kind of life here spoken of, it is evident that it cannot mean natural life; for although Christ gives this life to all, yet He did not require to come to our world expressly for that purpose. As Creator, He requires no body to command worlds into existence. Nor can it signify merely eternal life in heaven, although no doubt it includes that. If the question be, In what respects are we dead? then the question will afford the description of that life which He gives to His children.

1st, Christ came to give a life of justification. Previous to the possession of this life, the sinner is under the curse of a broken covenant, and, consequently, he is legally dead. We say a man is dead in the eye of the law when he is condemned to die; his life is forfeited. Such, then, is the situation of every sinner by nature, and until the act of justification passes upon him in the day of believing, or of union to Him who is emphatically styled *the Life*. Justification includes two separate benefits; although they cannot be separate in bestowment, yet they are distinct in character. Sin is pardoned, and the person and services are accepted. These two blessings correspond exactly with that righteousness of Christ, on account of which we are justified. This righteousness includes both his perfect, personal, and perpetual obedience to the precept of the law which He yielded as our surety, and that complete satisfaction which He gave to the sanction of that law by His sufferings and death. Christ is made of God unto us righteousness. "He was made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem them who were under the law."

2d, A life of adoption. We were prodigals from our Father's house,

and Christ's giving life includes adoption. It would be much were a person pardoned : it would be more were he received as a friend ; but more still were he made one of the family. But what saith the Scriptures ?—"Made under the law, not only to redeem them that were under the law, but that we might receive the adoption of sons." We know what the life of a son is. It is not that of a servant, it is not that of a friend ; but something far higher, nearer, and dearer. We are God's children ; and O, what will a parent not do for a child ! His life is bound up in the life of his children.

3d, Regeneration, or a spiritual life. All the preceding are only relative changes, but this is a real change. A child may be adopted from one family into another, but his foster father is only his father in name and in law, not in reality ; but believers are begotten by God—"born again, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

4th, Sanctification. Christ *came* by blood and water. "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they may be sanctified through the truth."

5th, A life of glory. "I give unto them eternal life." Of all which He hath given me, I should lose nothing ; but should raise it up again at the last day. The soul shall be glorified, the body shall be glorified ; "thy dead men shall *live*, my dead body shall they arise."

V. 1st, More abundant than the life that was forfeited by the fall—than that of paradise. There they enjoyed God's general goodness, with a promise of special goodness, only on condition of standing ; now God's mercy and love through a new covenant. There they enjoyed an earthly paradise ; now a heavenly. There they saw God's attributes by His works ; now they see God in human nature in heaven. There they praised God for His love ; now for His redeeming mercy.

2d, More than the life of the literal Canaan.

3d, More than could be expected, since they had fallen and rebelled ; the execution of the sentence was what they alone could have expected or even imagined.

4th, More than they could ask, think, or conceive. "Eye hath not seen," &c.

5th, With more abundant evidence than under the former economy.

6th, With more glory to a three-one-God, from its medium, the death of Christ.

7th, With more cost to the Saviour.

SPRING, OR YOUTH.

PART I.

Job xiv. 2—"He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down."

"The winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come."

My dear young friends, you will see at once that this is a description of one of the loveliest seasons of the year—the spring. Every thing

is beautiful in its season; but if there is one season that has a larger share of the beauties of nature than another, it is spring.

I am sure there are none who appreciate and enjoy its beauties more than you do, my young friends, who are now in the pleasant days of youth, or spring of life. I trust that both you and I may derive pleasure and profit from tracing, for a little, the similitude between the spring of nature and the spring of life and of grace.

May the great Husbandman bless our feeble efforts to sow the good seed, and prepare the soil of the heart for its reception, seeing that the soil in its natural state brings forth nothing but briars and thorns; and it is one of the laws of our all-wise Creator, there is a seed time as well as a harvest in the spiritual as in the natural world. "Paul may plant, Apollos may water; but it is God alone who can give the increase."

Can you tell me, my young friends, why you all rejoice so in the flowers of spring?

Some of you will remember with what delight, in your early childhood, you reclined on nature's green carpet, all bespangled with millions of daisies—how you formed the garlands with which you decked yourselves from their exhaustless numbers.

Perhaps one will say, Oh, I love so to gather bunches of primroses and daffodils, which are now shining like stars in the meadow. Or some little timid one will take an especial delight in possessing herself of yon lowly violet from the root of the hedge. Another, just released from the duties of the day, enters with much pleasure his favourite spot of ground, wishing to see if his flowers which have been in bud for some days have not yet burst forth. Or, it may be, a youthful sick one has just been allowed to step out to enjoy the music of the sky, and the refreshing breath of spring; she seems to inhale new life from yon fragrant lily or wallflower with which some kind friend has presented her, and rejoices in all she sees or hears above and around her.

Man cometh forth like a flower.

How the parent's heart rejoices to look on the face of his little one, in happy repose, unconscious of any care or danger, or to listen to his first attempt to lisp the endearing names of father and mother! But when this delicate plant has been carefully trained for many years, it expands in beauty, and bursts forth in full luxuriance of strength and vigour, so as to entwine itself round the hearts of parents, brothers, and sisters, and strikes its roots deeply into the genial soil of the warm hearts of loving companions with such strength that no human power can uproot them. Then this lovely flower sheds its fragrance on all around, and seems to bloom securely, so that no wind could ever sweep it away.

We have just noticed the flowers of nature and the flower of life; let us now consider, for a little, the spring of grace.

You know, my young friends, that the gardener would not look for flowers if he did not sow the seed or plant the roots. No; he does this with much care and anxiety. How he watches the growth of the precious seed he has cast into the ground! How he looks day after

day to see if it is springing, or to see whether some destructive grub or insect may not have injured the precious plant! If so, he may have again to sow the seed: he endeavours to uproot noxious weeds which might choke the good seed; and looks for the blessing of heaven in sending refreshing showers and sunny days to cause it to grow up to maturity.

Now, the gardener is an emblem of all Christ's faithful ministers, Christian parents, and teachers. They watch with intensest solicitude for the springing of the seed which they have often sown in tears, accompanied by many prayers. They look anxiously for the springing and appearing of every good principle, and for the blossoms of love to God and to his holy day; obedience to parents, brotherly love, and gratitude. There are many other fair flowers which your friends delight to see in this your spring or youth, such as—an earnest desire to glorify God in all things; a fear to offend Him by breaking any of His commandments; humility, piety, or a prayerful spirit; delight in God's holy Word; and an amiable and obliging disposition to all.

As the natural soil must be prepared by the careful husbandman, else nothing will grow, so must your hearts be renewed by the Spirit of God, ere any of these fruits will appear.

Now, the blossoms of which we have been speaking are ardently desired in this their season. After all the means have been used—after your instructors have given line upon line, precept upon precept—how will it pain their loving hearts if they have reason to fear that their efforts have been all in vain; if, instead of these fair blossoms for which they looked, nothing is to be found but briars and thorns, and rank weeds, many of which have been the planting of an enemy, who is ever busy watching his opportunity to catch away the good seed, and to sow his tares in your youthful hearts.

Let me urge you, my dear young friends, to seek the blessing of God on the instructions of those whom God has set over you—to whom He has committed the culture and training of your young minds, so that the good seed sown by them may take root, and bring forth fruit unto eternal life. Attend diligently on the means of grace. Pray that the Holy Spirit would prepare the soil of your hearts, which is by sin hard and stony; and that He would grant His blessing on the reading and hearing of His holy Word, that you may, like Timothy, from childhood know the holy Scriptures, "which are able to make you wise unto salvation." Offer to Christ the first-fruits of your days; the best of your time, strength, talents, and influence. Strive to imitate the good Josiah, who began early to seek the Lord God of his fathers—whose heart was tender; and God blessed him, and made him such a blessing to his church, that he was instrumental in the reformation of it, at a time when it was very corrupt. The Scriptures abound with God's gracious invitations to the young. "My son, give me thine heart." "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me."

"Wilt thou not, from this time, cry unto me, my Father; thou art the guide of my youth."

The Great Shepherd gathers the lambs with His arm. In the days

of His flesh on earth, He took children in His arms, and blessed them ; and said to those who would have sent them away, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Oh, then, devote the flower of your youth to Christ ! When on earth, He delighted to hear the hosannas of the children in the temple ; and He is even now waiting to be gracious to you.

A flower, when offered in the bud,
Is no vain sacrifice ;
A broken and a contrite heart,
Lord, thou wilt not despise.

If you seek God now, He will be found of you ; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off for ever. May those who watch for your souls never have to mourn that they have laboured in vain, and spent their strength for nought, and in vain ; but may they have to give in their account with joy, and, like the Apostle, say—"I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth."

EXTRACTS.

ANECDOTE OF DR TAYLOR, THE MARTYR.

On his way to the place of execution, accompanied by the sheriff and his company, when within two miles of the place of execution, it is recorded "That he desired, for somewhat, to light off his horse ; which done, he leaped, and set a frisk or twain as men commonly do in dancing. 'Why, Master Doctor,' quoth the sheriff, 'how do you now ?' He answered, 'Well, God be praised, good Master Sheriff, never better ; for now I know I am almost at home. I lack not past two stiles to go over, and I am even at my Father's house.' "

FERVENT LONGING TO BE WITH CHRIST.

It is recorded in the memoirs of the Rev. John Janeway, that "Those that did not see, cannot well conceive what a sweet frame he was in for at least six weeks before he died. His soul was almost always filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. How oft would he cry out, 'Oh, that I could but let you know what I now feel ! Oh, that I could show you what I see ! Oh, that I could express a thousandth part of that sweetness that I now find in Christ ! You would all then think it well worth the while to be religious. Oh, my dear friends, we little think what Christ is worth upon a deathbed ! I would not for a world, nay, for millions of worlds, be now without Christ and a pardon. I would not for a world live any longer ; the very thought of a possibility of recovery makes me even tremble.' "

BISHOP HALL'S ADDRESS TO A RED-BREAST.

"Pretty bird, how cheerfully dost thou sit and sing, yet knowest not where thou art, nor where thou shalt make thy next meal, and at night must shroud thyself in a bush for lodging ! What a shame is it for me, that see before me so liberal provisions of my God, and find myself set warm under my own roof, yet am ready to droop under a distrustful and unthankful dulness ! Had I so little certainty of my harbour and purveyance, how heartless should I be, how careful ! how little list should I have to make music to thee or myself ! Surely thou comest not hither without a providence. God sent thee, not so much to delight, as to shame me ; but all in a conviction of my sullen unbelief, who, under more apparent means, am less

cheerful and confident. Reason and faith have not done so much in me as in the mere instinct of nature. Want of foresight makes thee more merry, if not more happy, here, than the foresight of better things maketh me.

"O God, thy providence is not impaired by those powers. Thou hast given me above these brute things; let not my greater helps hinder me from a holy security and comfortable reliance upon Thee."

MEANS BY WHICH RELIGION WILL TELL ON THE WORLD.

"The world will never feel the power of the gospel, until the Church brings it forth from the pulpit and the prayer-meeting, and carries it about in the street; takes it to the homes of friends and neighbours; presses it everywhere to the attention of men, as the one thing needful. The minister must do this—each member must do this—before the apathy of the masses around us will be broken. Sermons may be ably written and eloquently delivered; the prayers of the preacher and of his people may be earnest and fervent; but if, outside the sanctuary, their conversation is all about worldly things—if they never go to a sinner and say, 'You are in danger; you should repent or you will perish!' the impression is, that they do not believe their own sermons and prayers, or that they are sadly deficient in moral courage."

WAYS OF BEING USEFUL.

"*By your example.* Without exhibiting this, in the first instance, all our other exertions will be utterly useless. Your own example sets a seal to your sincerity, and gives weight to every counsel you may offer. You must become a living epistle, that you may be known and read by all men; and who does not know that men are more deeply impressed by living epistles, inscribed by the Spirit of God, than by epistles only by pen and ink?

"*By conversation.* Few men were more blessed in the conversion of souls than the celebrated Harlan Page; yet he was not a minister, but a man in the common rank of life. Now, by what instrumentality did he accomplish so much good? It was simply by conversing earnestly with all whom he met on the great concerns of the soul. Go in a similar spirit and do likewise, and you shall be all alike useful.

"*By correspondence.* There are few men who do not write to some friends; but how many are there who write without any right or serious aim! They write about the news of the day, but nothing about the news of salvation. If you wish to be useful, make it a rule never to let even the smallest note pass from your hands without containing something savouring of the truth, and leading to Christ."

Selected Poetry.

NO NIGHT THERE.

Wand'rer, full of doubts and fears,
Travelling through this vale of tears,—
Pilgrim in the path of life,
Seeking pleasure, finding strife,—
Though earth's shades are darkly creeping,
Though thine eyes are dim with weeping,
Lift thy tearful gaze above
To that better home of love:
There shall come no withering blight—
There shall be no gloomy night.

Voyager on life's troubled sea,
Sailing to eternity,—
Though the billows, wild and dark,

Overwhelm the sinking bark ;
 Though hope's light hath all departed,
 And thou art weary, broken-hearted,—
 See ! amid the deepening gloom,
 Far beyond the dreary tomb,
 A glorious beacon-star is shining—
 Angel hands for thee are twining
 An immortal wreath of flowers ;
 And within those heavenly bowers
 There shall come no withering blight—
 There shall be no gloomy night.

There no mournful wail of sadness
 Mingles with the strain of gladness ;
 But a glorious song is swelling,
 Of a Saviour's mercy telling ;
 Angel choirs the song repeat,
 And cast their crowns at Jesus' feet.
 Oh, that world is ever bright—
 There shall be no gloomy night !

Earth ! thy storms are dark and dreary,
 And our hearts grow faint and weary,
 As, with faltering steps, we stray
 Through life's tangled, devious way ;
 Often cherished friends forsaking,
 Leave our hearts with sorrow aching ;
 Often we are made to weep
 For the lov'd ones called to sleep ;
 And on our pathway falls the gloom
 Of the dark and dreary tomb.

But a star still shines above us,
 Telling one is left to love us ;
 And we know that, when at last
 All life's weary days are past,
 We shall join the angel band
 In the brighter, better land ;
 Where the angel choirs are singing,
 Where immortal flowers are springing—
 Never chilled by earth's dark blight,—
 Where there comes no gloomy night.

Westminster Herald.

" HE HATH BORNE OUR GRIEFS."

ISAIAH LIII.

Surely Christ thy griefs hath borne,
 Weeping soul, no longer mourn ;
 View Him bleeding on the tree,
 Pouring out His life for thee ;
 There thy ev'ry sin He bore,
 Weeping soul, lament no more.

All thy crimes on Him were laid ;
 See ! upon His blameless head
 Wrath its utmost vengeance pours,
 Due to my offence and yours ;
 Wounded in our stead, He is
 Bruised for our iniquities.

Weary sinner, keep thine eyes
 On the atoning sacrifice;
 There the incarnate Deity
 Number'd with transgressors see!
 There His Father's absence mourns,
 Nail'd and bruised, and crown'd with thorns.

See thy God his head bow down—
 Hear the man of sorrows groan!
 For thy ransom there condemned,
 Stripp'd, derided, and blasphemed;
 Bleed, the guiltless for th' unclean,—
 Made an off'ring for thy sin.

Cast thy guilty soul on Him,
 Find Him mighty to redeem;
 At His feet thy burden lay,
 Look thy doubts and cares away;
 Now by faith the Son embrace,
 Plead His promise, trust His grace.

Lord, thy arm must be reveal'd
 Ere I can by faith be heal'd;
 Since I scarce can look to thee,
 Cast a gracious eye on me;
 At thy feet myself I lay,
 Shine, O shine my fears away.

Westminster Herald.

ATROCIOUS CRIMES AND VICIOUS EDUCATION.

THE present period of British history is characterized by atrocious crimes. Society is stirred to its depths by the outbursts of human depravity among the educated classes. That theft, and licentiousness, and murder should occur among "the degraded masses" is thought nothing strange; but that such manifestations of depravity should be found among the educated or the rich seems to shock every sense of propriety. We have become accustomed to speak of the "masses" as if the corruption of human nature had found its sole embodiment beyond a certain degree in the descending scale of the social system. In the minds of many poverty and crime are inseparably connected, while in a similar way riches and propriety of conduct are duly associated. It is upon this principle that many of our philanthropic schemes are established and advocated. Designed for the "sunken masses," their operations are confined to the poor, while it seems to be forgotten that the same depravity is at work among the various classes of society. Many in their counting-houses and drawing-rooms contribute for the moral elevation of the masses, who need the visit of a missionary and the perusal of a religious tract as much as the humblest outcast in the wynds of the city. But their position in life secures such against the obtrusive visit; while standing fair in the estimation of society, they are accustomed to look down upon poverty as though crime were its native result. It seems to be forgotten that, in the majority of cases, the poverty is rather the result of crime, and that

the ranks of the most debased are filled up by the victims of the middle and higher classes of society. Away, then, with the idea that rank, or education, or wealth, can set limits to human depravity! To the workings of moral evil there is no restraint but the power and the grace of God. The former controls the malignity of fallen angels and wicked men, while the latter regulates the conduct of genuine Christians. The moral line of demarcation is not drawn between the rich and the poor, nor between the educated and the ignorant, but "between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not."

Recent crimes and recent judicial investigations have suggested these reflections, which we submit for the careful consideration of our readers, in hope that they may correct some of those false theories which are so current, and prepare the way for the consideration of some of the phases of modern education.

With many philanthropists education is the panacea for all the evils of the social system. From the senate-house to the cottage, educational theories are freely propounded, while crude systems of national education, supported by fallacious arguments, are annually presented for public sanction. It is not with this general question that we have more especially to do, but with those current ideas which lead to family action in regard to this momentous subject, which will tell for good or evil upon the present and on coming generations.

It is universally admitted that the education of youth has a permanent relation to the moral character of the years of maturity. It is supposed, moreover, that cases of wide departure from the paths of moral rectitude ought to be viewed as the outbursts of depravity, irrespective of the education enjoyed. Admitting that there are such, on the principles already enunciated, yet we hesitate not to affirm that many of the crimes by which society is startled may be traced directly to a vicious education.

In the lips of many, education means nothing more than acquaintance with a few of the elementary branches taught in a day-school, or the higher arts and accomplishments of a boarding-school training. This, however, is but a part, and the minor part, of education. This reaches only a few of the mental powers, but embraces not the whole man. It overlooks his condition, moral responsibilities, and future destiny. To direct education to the intellectual powers only, is to begin on a wrong basis, and stop short of the final end. Education, in the proper sense, embraces the whole physical, mental, moral, and religious training of a social and immortal being. The climax of education is the right formation of moral character.

This is the education to be desiderated, in order to meet the existing state of society. The education of *moral principle alone* can arrest the progress of crime, and rectify the evils of the social system. It does not matter though a youth be distinguished in the various branches of intellectual learning if the fear of God is not before his eyes. His learning gives him more power in the social scale, but a power that reacts specially upon his own tendencies, and furnishes nourishment to his own corruption.

Society has been shocked during recent years by the most atrocious frauds. Honorary titles have been debased by the meanest acts of fraud and forgery. Legislative influence and religious profession have been at times combined in order to gull the public, and gloss over the most infamous transactions. Some of the perpetrators have fallen by their own hand, when concealment became longer impossible. Others are now enduring the felon's doom, irrespective of titles or former dignity.* But the tide of corruption is not arrested, and the baneful maxims and principles which lead to these results are not rooted out.

The worst of these cases is but the development of that covetous spirit which characterizes the present age. If children are taught by example to worship mammon, what can be expected but that their whole mental energies will be invested for the acquisition of wealth. If our sons and our daughters are taught to shun the poor, and cultivate alone the society of the rich—if fortune-makers are chiefly commended, and men are prized by the rapidity of their acquisitions and the display of their wealth—if friendships are formed and society cultivated on the score of worldly possessions, irrespective of religion, or even of moral character—if the wealthy libertine can retain his place in society, and be welcome to the family circle, while the victims of his lust are piteously shunned and despised,—what other impression can be produced upon the minds of the young but that money is the chief good, and that a display of wealth, with or without the means, is the only way to command the respect, and enjoy the privileges, of genteel society. Wherever wealth, irrespective of moral worth, is taken as the graduating scale for society, there such crimes will assuredly be found as have recently astonished our mercantile circles. The formal education of the very best school cannot possibly check the home-trainings of pride and vanity; neither can it cope with those "tricks in trade" and mercantile deceptions, which sear the youthful conscience, and deaden moral feeling.

To this admiration of wealth may also be traced that contempt of honest industry which so prominently marks the present age. Among even the middle classes, there are not a few who look with disdain upon manual labour. The education of daughters especially is assuming an alarming aspect. Nothing is considered becoming except those higher accomplishments, which not only engross their whole time, but unfit them for the proper discharge of domestic duties. In many cases this is succeeded by the education of the ball-room, the theatre, and the public promenade, while novel-reading fills up the intervening hours. By this process of adult education, the corruption of the human heart is matured for the grossest deeds of wickedness. The mind is rendered conversant with crime, and the principles of virtue supplanted by the ascendancy of the baser passions. If

* While we write, government notice has been given for the removal to one of the Australian penal settlements of 400 convicts, amongst whom are—Sir John Dean Paul, Strahan, and Bates, Robson, Redpath, Agar, and Seward,—most of whom recently moved in the better classes of society. The fate of James Sadlier, M.P., Mr Salmon, banker, and the trial of Madeline Smith, are still fresh in the public mind.

intrigue, and disobedience to parents, and licentiousness, and murder, are the culminating points in the most popular novels—if the perpetrators of these are the heroes of the stage—it need not be wondered though among our highly educated and fashionable youths there should be such outbursts of depravity as cause society to stand aghast.

The question has long been put—How shall the sunken masses be elevated? But the recent aspects of crime are propounding another problem—How shall the idle classes be kept from sinking into vice and degradation? If the iniquity of Sodom—pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness in her and in her daughters—introduced that universal corruption which provoked the dire judgments of heaven, will not similar causes produce similar results? It has been well remarked by the judicious Henry, that, while Satan tempts all, those who are idle tempt Satan. The human mind, being naturally active, must find employment. If not occupied with that which is lawful and right, it will soon be employed by Satan in that which is evil. Well would it be for those who have the care of the young to study the various elements of the virtuous woman's character, as described by the Spirit of God in the concluding chapter of the book of Proverbs.

Did space permit the expansion of argument or illustration, we think it might clearly be established that the phases of modern crime, which shock the sensibilities of society, are not so much the outbursts of depravity, in spite of a liberal education, as the positive results of a depraved system of training, rapidly extending through the various classes of the community. The difference of classes, in regard to depravity, is little more than the difference of circumstances. Wherever the fear of God is not, *there* human corruption will bear its baneful fruits. Wherever the intellectual powers are cultivated, while the moral powers are neglected, *there* will be unfolded the same alienation of the heart from God, and the same disregard of the rights and interests of man.

There is much reason to fear that, in modern times, the neglect of proper education among the poor finds its co-relative of improper education among the rich. In the former case, it is not unfrequently the direct moulding of vicious habits which mature and develop with the lapse of time. In the other, it is but the moulding of negative virtue, which requires nothing more than favourable circumstances and ordinary temptation to make it give place to the most abandoned vices. As matters stand, the children of the poor are early removed from the influence of parental authority and maternal affection; but it is not less true that the children of the rich are as certainly removed from the influences of domestic life by false ideas of what constitutes a good education. Instead of supporting elementary or academical schools in their own locality, which might be under their own supervision, many parents send their sons and their daughters away to the Continent, or to some distant city of another kingdom, irrespective of the moral effects which it may produce upon their character and future destiny. It has been proved, by the experience of all ages—and recent times have furnished abundant evidence—that vice may luxuriate among the higher classes as well as the lower; yet fond

parents, for the sake of a few accomplishments, will risk their sons and daughters, day and night, with companions regarding whose moral principles they have not the slightest knowledge. But, irrespective of this, the long separation from home, during the most critical period of human existence, is in itself pernicious in the highest degree. The intellect a teacher may develop, but the development of the affections is peculiarly the province of parents, in which they cannot be safely supplanted by any other. The highest position that any teacher of youth can attain, is to aid the parents in their proper work; but the very best conditions of public tuition cannot meet those higher objects for which God has provided in the constitution of the family.

Let not society, then, expend all its indignation upon the head of the hapless victim who has recently degraded her sex, her position in society, her liberal education, her religious profession, and her family. Her case, however painful, is but the exponent of a widespread system of modern education, that will sooner or later bear its fruits of unrighteousness. Let indignation rise against those who stealthily enter the homes and destroy the peace of families, whether rich or poor. Let it burn freely against the educated and wealthy libertine, until he shall no longer find a welcome in the virtuous family. Let it be directed against the opera, the theatre, the ball-room, and the novelist library, until the young are made to know the difference between that which is good and that which is evil. However dark the shadow cast over some aspects of society, let the community learn to extract good out of the darkest deeds of human depravity. It is only at times that God lifts the curtain; but even then, it is not so much for the punishment of the culprit as for a beacon of warning to others likely to fall into the same iniquity, and as the exponent of those under-currents of moral influence which vitiate the general state of society. Would that the public press, which has been so minute in reporting the details of the recent investigation, were directed against the sources from which such crimes emanate; then would many be made to blush who think they can afford to look down with contempt upon the solitary victim. The crime confessed is not an uncommon one, even in that class of society with which she was associated; and but for the imputed crime of murder, it would have passed without note or comment in the page of local history. But as it is, let parents hear the note of solemn warning, and let the rising youth of the land pray to be kept from the path of the destroyer. Let the question of education be more maturely considered, and let society exclude from its privileges those who disregard the laws of morality.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Speech of the Rev. Thomas Duncan, of Newcastle, at the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church, held at Newcastle in April, 1857, on the Use of Instrumental Music, &c.

THIS is a very interesting pamphlet. The speech of Mr Duncan, and the statement by Dr Munro, are characterized by great ability and

faithfulness. The subject discussed is not only important in itself, but its importance is greatly increased as an index of the tendencies of Protestant communities abroad as well as at home—in England especially, but also in Presbyterian Scotland. There is a growing disposition to revert from the simplicity of worship—which it was the great object of the Reformers to restore to the primitive and scriptural standard, and which they had such success in establishing—to the sensuous forms of so-called worship, by which Popery has sought to commend itself to man, by gratifying their taste for carnal gratification. In reference to England, this is impressively stated by Mr Duncan in his speech.

"I feel myself compelled to consider this movement for instrumental music in connection with the manifestation of the religious spirit in the Christian Churches of this land; for we find a decided tendency towards decorative worship very prevalent, and steadily increasing in its force. This wide-spread predilection for the sensuous element in the external worship is alarming all thoughtful godly men, and is worthy of profound consideration. We are disposed to think that the Church of England, in retaining so many rites and ceremonies of the Mediæval Church, has largely invaded the simplicity and the spirituality of the New Testament dispensation, and has come far short of the ends of the great Protestant Reformation. And we know, for an unquestioned (though too little known by her own people) historical fact, that such was the opinion of Cranmer and the other eminent men who held the ecclesiastical helm at that important era. Yet we find this Church for the last twenty years convulsed by the determined, zealous efforts of a large party to improve, as they think, the too plain ritual of their public worship, with new ceremonies of dress and gestures, and with an increase of outward attractions, musical and architectural. Among our congregational brethren, we see that the organ having been generally introduced and used, a portion of ministers is aiming to supplant extemporaneous prayer by the mechanism of liturgical forms. And now, in this small Presbyterian Church, almost an exotic in this country, in which it was once the established religion, and had amongst its adherents a large portion of the nobility and nigh half the gentry of England, with the majority of its middle classes, both the yeomen and the citizens, we are called to contend against an unpresbyterian innovation—the actual introduction of an organ to accompany vocal praise by the minister and Session of one of our congregations at Liverpool, without the sanction of their ecclesiastical superiors, and their persistency in the practice, though the Synod of last year declared that the introduction of instrumental music in public worship is not approved by this Church.

"I cannot help viewing these three sorts of innovation, though differing in degree, as marked by the same spirit—a love of ceremonialism and ritualism, a secret alienation from scriptural spirituality of worship, and a departure from the principles of sound and evangelic Protestantism."

We are glad to find that this innovation on the simplicity of worship—for the maintenance of which the Nonconformists in England long made such strenuous efforts, and in contending for which they suffered—is not only meeting with determined opposition in the English Presbyterian Church, but that it is far from having the universal favour which its advocates would insinuate among other Christian denominations in South Britain, or with the godly in the Church of England itself. In reference to this Mr Duncan says—

"This I know, that not a few among Methodists and among Congregationalists do not entertain so very great admiration of the organ, and have a strong preference for the superior simplicity and superior power of mere vocal music in public worship. I have heard of evangelic clergymen in the Church of England, that some of them complain of the burden of debt, which the expensive purchase of a fine organ has imposed upon them, and that others regard with no complacency the excessive

predilection which many of their people have for such sensuous services, and would by no means consider the absence of the organ (which, in point of fact, is not found in many of the parish churches) as any mutilation, or deformity, or misfortune. Why, after all, should we wonder at this, since in one of her homilies there is contained a condemnation of the organ, and it is recorded in the discussions of her convocation about the ritual of worship, that the organ and some other ceremonies were retained only by a single vote of 59 to 58. In my circle of English acquaintances, I have been surely much more fortunate than some of my brethren have been. I know and have lived under the roof of English clergymen, who felt no sympathy with High Church and Jacobite prejudices, and who hated and execrated the cruel, bloody persecution of our covenanting forefathers by Scottish Prelacy—I have among my friends both Baptists and Congregationalists: I hear them, on many occasions, express the same reverential admiration for the persecuted Covenanters of Scotland as for the faithfulness and patience of English Puritans. Assuredly they would have heard with astonishment the disparagement of the authority which their principles and example are entitled to exert over our minds; and it is no recommendation of the organ that those who plead for its introduction among us, feeling the support which we derive from their undeniable aversion to the proposed innovation in our worship, thus ruthlessly attempt to dissipate the halo of glory with which their deeds and virtues still surround them, and disturb the feelings of sacredness by which they are embalmed in the hearts and memories of our godly people."

The advocates of the use of the organ charged those who opposed its introduction with unwarranted interference with their Christian liberty. This charge Mr Duncan indignantly repels in the following terms:—

"I throw back this charge upon *them*. You are not standing up, as you ignorantly and most mistakenly suppose, for true Christian liberty, but are seeking ignorantly to impose the yoke of mere human authority on the consciences of your fellow Christians. The Lord Jesus has purchased and has bestowed upon His Church, collectively and individually, a glorious charter of spiritual liberty, the various parts of which I need not at present enumerate; but one is the entire liberation of the conscience of His people from mere human authority within the sacred sphere of His religion. He alone is Lord of the conscience, which, as the Prophet of His Church, He instructs and binds by His Word and Spirit. When the false teachers in the Galatian Church attempted to fasten again the obligation of observing the Jewish rite of circumcision upon Gentile Christians after its abolition by the authority of our Saviour, what is the exhortation of the inspired Apostle to them in regard to this innovation? "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Our friends need to be reminded that *their* liberty does not coincide with this of the Apostle. We wish no greater extent of liberty than what Christ has granted us. Theirs being an addition of a human device resting upon mere human authority, is, like the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's image, a mixture of iron and clay."

Many in the Church of England, and in other corrupt churches, excuse themselves, in winking at prevailing evils in the ecclesiastical bodies to which they belong, by the fact that godly persons exist in such churches, and that they make it their aim to seek and promote their own personal salvation and that of others. In regard to such as have acted on this narrow, selfish principle, Mr Duncan says—

"They forgot that the Lord Jesus requires His people to maintain His cause and glorify His name, not only in their individual personality, but also in a corporate capacity. When I look to the Church of England, most cheerfully and most gladly I acknowledge how, in the case of numbers of its godly members and godly ministers, they glorify their Saviour in the practice of every Christian virtue, both in their own personal life and in the regulation of their families; but viewing their Church corporately, can the same assertion be made? When we remember the celebrated saying of Luther, that justification by faith in Christ, without the works

of the law, is the article of a standing or falling church, and know the most melancholy fact that of its 18,000 clergymen, only 8000, on the most favourable estimate, preach this vital truth, can we say that such a church glorifies our Saviour, and accomplishes the end of His atoning death? Such a fact affords a potent illustration of the principle for which the great divines of the Churches of the Reformation, both in this island and on the continent, more or less extensively fought, and for which our English Puritans and Scottish Presbyterians struggled with lofty, and stern, and patient endurance—that a church in its constitution and administration should represent the revealed mind of Christ in the general maintenance of His truth, and in the purity of His worship and ordinances. If, then, we wish to understand the scriptural doctrine of the Visible Church, we will obtain no answer from the excellent godly evangelicals of the last century, and must travel upwards to the great theologians either of the troublous times of British history, or of the ever-memorable era of the Reformation.”

The able statement of Dr Munro is characterized by the same respect to principle. But we must confine ourselves to one brief extract, which is so nearly in the words employed in our pages, that it might seem to have been borrowed the one from the other; but of this there was no possibility on either side.

“The first of these motions,”—viz., that of Rev. Thomas Duncan, prohibiting the use of the organ, in accordance with the former deliverance of Synod—“the only one that would have maintained our principle, sustained the character of the Synod, and ensured peace—was first lost; the clerk’s was next lost; and Mr Chalmers’ was unhappily adopted.

“The first was the only unexceptionably proper motion, for which every friend of the interests of the Church should have striven. Of the other two, the one was a compromise which should never have been broached: the other, Mr Chalmers’, was a great calamity. That the Church might escape at least the *worse* of the two evils, and be saved a double blow, some of us, who had voted for, and supported, the first motion, so sound and good, felt, when that was lost, constrained to vote for the clerk’s, in opposition to the one which threatens to entail so many evils on our communion. But it has been the introduction of the compromise that has done the mischief; and for this the Church owes little gratitude to its authors.”

It is not necessary to add, that we wish the minority in the English Presbyterian Synod all success in their able efforts to preserve purity of worship in that Church. Their opponents may have numbers on their side, but they have neither Scripture nor the practice of the primitive church on their side. They are entering on the course which issued in all the abominations of Popery as its consummation. They are turning away from the path in which the purest churches of the Reformation walked, and fraternizing, so far at least, with the persecutors of their puritan and covenanting ancestors, and with those parties in England and Scotland who are turning their backs on Protestantism, and their faces Romeward. And, moreover, if we are to judge by the specimen before us, they had evidently the worst of the argument; nor do we expect that they will seriously attempt to meet the reasoning of this pamphlet, the matter of which deserves the serious attention of Presbyterians in Scotland as well as England, and also of other Christians.

The Bulwark, or Reformation Journal. London: Seeleys, Jackson, & Halliday, and J. Nisbet & Co. Edinburgh: J. Nichol.

This periodical is still conducted with great ability, and abounds with

materials which furnish proof of the multiform and baneful evils by which Popery, in its past history and present actings, is characterized. It is, however, manifest, as we anticipated, that this work, and the Society with which it is connected, have failed to realize the expectations that their promoters anticipated. It is lamentable that the prospect of success, as to obtaining even the withdrawal of the Maynooth endowment, is darker than ever. If we mistake not, the leading cause of this is the faint impressions which the religious part of the community in Britain and Ireland have of the importance of national religion in its highest aspect of duty to God;—that nations, as such, in their public organized capacity, being the subjects of His moral government, are bound by the eternal law to give Him glory by regulating their administration according to the revelation with which He has favoured them. A very large number of the adherents of the disestablished churches are avowed voluntaries, and the present tendency of nearly all these churches is to an entire severance of religion from the State. This has paralyzed all the efforts that have been made in behalf of the Sabbath, of scriptural education, and in opposition to Popery. There is likewise a sad lack of high principle animating those connected with the established churches in their advocacy of the establishment principle. With many of these it is merely a party question, and the endowment is the only matter that is prominently seen as the subject of contest on the one side or the other. The eagle-eyed enemies of Protestantism, and of liberty, civil and religious, who are making strenuous, though stealthy, efforts to spread and advance the antichristian cause, are sharp-sighted enough to mark this state of matters, and artful enough to adapt their measures to them. They have formed a political party; and, seeing the divisions which exist in the Protestant ranks, they so employ their influence as to thwart every movement in Parliament in a right direction, and sell their votes to unprincipled statesmen, who have no higher law of conduct than expediency.

The last Parliamentary election has disclosed a destitution of religious principle among professed Christians, in Scotland especially, both in connection with the Established Church, and other churches of high name, which could scarcely have been believed, did not palpable facts place it beyond controversy. But it shows how powerless the efforts of the Reformation Society have been to produce just views of the evils and dangers of Popery on the minds of the adherents of those churches that are its most zealous supporters. It is not amalgamation, founded on compromise, that is to enable us to present a strong front to Popish aggression, or secure the Divine countenance, but an honest and earnest desire to have all things in the institutions and administration of the church and the nation conformed to the Divine standard. If we would effectually oppose and overcome Popery, we must seek to have the seeds whence this sprung up in the primitive church removed out of professed Protestant churches, and the spirit that animated the Reformers of the sixteenth century in our own and other countries revived.

It is gratifying to find that, while so many who would be esteemed

Protestants make light of the evils of Popery, and when its abettors in general are, so far from being ashamed of its past doings, that they are adding to its abominations, God is raising up some witnesses against its follies among Papists themselves, of which the following document, given in the July number of the *Bulwark*, is a specimen, and will speak for itself:—

PROTEST OF DUTCH ROMISH JANSENIST BISHOPS AGAINST THE DOCTRINE
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

Pastoral Instructions of the Archbishop of Utrecht and the Bishops of Haarlem and Dauter, on the subject of the Immaculate Conception.

When we heard of the great preparations that were being made for deliberating on the point of the conception at Rome, in December, 1854, we found, and with good reason, that these preparations would all be found eventually to have been little more than an outward form; but we nevertheless hoped that the prayers of many good men, so earnestly solicited by the Holy Father, for the light of the Holy Spirit, would be so heard as to succeed in turning the counsels of Ahitophel into foolishness. The unsearchable judgments of Divine Providence have otherwise ordered. Pius, alas! the weak Pius, having once thrown himself into the arms of the Jesuits, has now again lent his name and his influence to accomplish a deed deeply grieving all good men, and causing new scandal in the church.

The encyclical letter of the 8th of December, 1854, threatens the wrath of Almighty God, &c., to all who should dare to speak against, or even not to accept the decision therein announced respecting the conception of the Virgin.

How great soever may be our respect for his Holiness, as head of the Church and the centre of Catholic unity, we should dread still more the displeasure of the Almighty if we accepted such decision.

St Paul did not threaten the people of Berea with the displeasure of Almighty God when they searched the Scriptures to see if the things which were brought before them "were so;" and St Luke even confers upon them special honour—"These were more noble than those of Thessalonica," because they did so search. If this doctrine of the Immaculate Conception can be so thoroughly proved to be a doctrine of the Catholic Church, as in such apostolic letter it is declared to be, there need no fear arise from such search; yea, rather ought an appeal go forth inviting such a search, that it may be patent to the whole world that we are indebted to the care and zeal of Pius IX. for this discovery.

Inasmuch as we have no conviction that Pius has spoken an infallible word when he declared the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin to be a revealed truth of the Catholic faith, we feel it to be our duty to examine the grounds upon which such declaration rests.

These grounds are said by them to be five:—

1. Holy Scripture.
2. Sacred tradition.
3. The continuous feeling of the church.
4. The wonderful unanimity of Catholic pastors and of the faithful.
5. The illustrious acts and constitutions of his predecessors in the papal chair.

After combating the above grounds, they say, in reference to the fourth, "Where is this wonderful unanimity to be found? Naturally in the answers given by the bishops to the encyclical letter addressed to them from Gaeta in 1849. The analysis justifies no such unanimity. The whole dogma of the Immaculate Conception being thus entirely new, there need be no wonder that the mode of announcing it was entirely new. Never formerly were such utterances heard from a Pope's lips; formerly it was the congregated fathers who, after previous deliberations, &c., judged and determined. But it was on this occasion no church council, although, for the eye of the world, such a colouring was attempted to be given to it. The bishops were merely mute attestators of what was proposed by Pope Pius IX., and with too great reason may the words of the Prophet be applied to them—"Blind watchmen! they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs; they cannot bark" (Isaiah lvi. 10).

Oh, how did those teachers in Israel belie their character! and how was their character trampled on by the first in rank amongst them! An open contumely and spot of shame is thus thrown on the Episcopal character and office, those functionaries having nullified their very position and work as judges of the faith.

When the successor of St Peter gave utterance to the lie that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception had been revealed by God, was there no Paul to withstand and gainsay him to his face? On the contrary, they winked in the lowest cajolery when one of the French bishops looked his Holiness in the face, and said—"Holy Father, thou hast not only decided the Immaculate Conception: thou hast decided thine own infallibility."

Under the fifth head of the pastoral instruction, reference is made to Gregory the Great, Innocent III. and Innocent V., Clement VI., &c., to show that for fourteen centuries a doctrine was held in entire contradiction to that promulgated by Pius IX., and it is then said—

We leave it to every unprejudiced person to decide whether we have good ground for the strictures we have made, and whether we have proved or not that the apostolic letter issued by Pius IX., on the 8th of December, 1854, is simply a *timine* (*zamenwoesfeet*) of untruths, wherein the name of Scripture and sacred traditions are shamefully misapplied to exalt into a matter of faith a mere matter of feeling or subjective impression, not even based on the lowest grade of probability.

In conclusion, we solemnly declare before the whole world, that the maxim "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ad omnibus*," reaches neither in teaching nor in acceptance to this dogma of the Immaculate Conception; and we say to all Catholics, "Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set" (Prov. xxii. 28). "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let them be accursed" (Gal. i. 8). "Remember how thou hast received and heard; and hold fast" (Rev. iii. 8).

† JOHN, Archbishop of Utrecht.

† JOHN HENRY, Bishop of Haarlem.

† HERMAN, Bishop of Deventer.

THE INDIAN MUTINY.

ALL true patriots and lovers of mankind feel an intense interest in the present aspect of affairs in our vast Indian Empire, and are deeply affected with the great calamity which the Almighty Disposer of all things has permitted to overtake that portion of the British dominions. There has for some time past been a growing conviction that God had high and gracious ends to accomplish, by a varied chain of events, through which so many millions of the blinded heathen have become subject to the sceptre and influence of one of the most enlightened Christian nations; and there is a confident hope cherished by Christians in India and at home that, though God has in righteous judgment measured out the present stroke, he has great ends yet to fulfil by this connection, and will overrule this great evil for ultimate good.

That Britain has greatly failed in fulfilling the duties which it owed to the teeming millions of Hindostan will be readily admitted. The great object which those who have had most intercourse with that wide country have sought, has been an increase of worldly gain. To this, as a supreme end, almost every other consideration has been long subordinated; nor has this end been always sought by righteous means. While those who visited the shores of India, and held inter-

course with the inhabitants in different capacities—as merchants or civil officers, soldiers or sailors—bore the Christian name, they lamentably failed to manifest the spirit of true Christianity to the heathen with whom they mingled. Exceptions to this there were at an early period; and it is great cause of thankfulness that for some time past the exceptions in all departments have been greatly multiplied. It has also been put extensively into the hearts of Christians at home to endeavour to avail themselves of the door of usefulness opened up for diffusing the light of the glorious gospel among the heathen where such a large field was furnished under British protection for this labour of love. And it is one of the inscrutable steps of the Divine procedure that the sad events—the tidings of which have filled so many hearts with sorrow—have taken place, when the prospects of success in missionary enterprise were brightening, and it was hoped that the foundations of the systems of superstition and idolatry which had so long had absolute dominion over that land were in the course of being shaken, and would soon be overthrown. But this is one of the ways in which God sees meet to call his people to the exercise of faith and patience.

There is a special call to prayer, on the part of Christians, that our nation and its rulers may be led to consider their ways, and reform what has been amiss in our administration in India. The hand of God should be seen in this dispensation; our sins against Him should be acknowledged, as well as against the Hindoos, and everything displeasing to God and injurious to man discontinued. While the most efficient measures for counteracting the evils with which we are threatened should be adopted, we should be earnest to enjoy Divine leading and countenance in what we do, and deeply convinced that, however great our national resources are, our success or failure in this and every other enterprise is in the hand of God. The courage of our soldiers, the skill of our generals, and the wisdom of our statesmen, are the gift of God, and they will be continued so long as God has purposes to accomplish by us. But how easy is it with Him to withdraw such gifts, and leave our extended empire to be broken to pieces.

Feeling, however, as we do, notwithstanding our great national sin and our accumulated national guilt and wickedness, that there is no other realm in the world which is putting forth the same extent of salutary influence, or from being connected with which heathen nations are likely to derive so much benefit—feeling this, we have a strong conviction that this extended British influence shall be continued, and that it is yet to be overruled for still greater good to the nations. And how earnest should we be that it may be increased a thousand-fold, and for this end that, through the instrumentality of the church, there may be a thorough national reformation effected. It is deeply to be lamented that the hearts of Christians are not more set on seeing that highest of all the triumphs of true religion on the earth—the reformation of *nations* in their laws and whole civil administration.

The following statements as to India, in a letter to the *News of the Churches*, dated Calcutta, June 1, 1857, from M'Leod Wylie,

Esq., are very distinct and satisfactory, and will be read with interest. After some introductory remarks, he proceeds to say—

"We have had an extensive mutiny in the army. This letter will not be published till the 1st August, and it is impossible to tell what further tidings may by that time have reached you. But if you will observe how promptly and cordially the Maharajah of Gwalior, and the Rajahs of Puttiala, Bhurtpore, and Rewah, have turned out with their forces, and assisted in preventing the extension of the insurrection, you will see ground to believe that our hold on the country is very strong, and that these chiefs well know it.

"I would not underrate the importance of the calamity. It will entail enormous losses and expenses on the Government; it has occasioned, and will occasion, a great amount of private suffering; and it involves the necessity of a total remodelling of the Sepoy army. I believe, too, that it raises questions to which the people of England will require satisfactory answers. Why, after the annexation of Oude, had we three European infantry regiments *less* than before? Why was the Mussulman mind after that annexation further excited by a Persian war? These are questions for the Home Government; and there are others to which I will not advert. But, putting these matters aside, and considering not the causes of the outbreak at present, but its prospects, I see little reason for apprehension. Whatever may be the condition of the *people* in Bengal, I believe that there, and in the upper provinces, the landholders generally have now a valuable interest in the land, which would be perilled by a revolution; and that a vast number of natives, from the influence of trade, and from having invested property (to the extent of thirty millions sterling) in the public loans, have a direct interest in the maintenance of public tranquillity. But more than this, England's position in India, as the centre of Asia, is of Divine appointment. The hand of God has controlled most conflicting and hostile influences heretofore, and His counsels, I am deeply persuaded, have provided for England, in this country, a work which must be accomplished, by whomsoever it may be resisted.

"In looking back, it is indeed easy to see where we have failed; and that God's judgments might be expected to mingle with His mercies. It is notorious how grossly nominal Christians have often dishonoured their profession in this country, and caused the heathen to blaspheme. The Government, indeed, boasts of its 'strict neutrality,' but it is a matter of simple historical fact, that too often it has patronized Hindooism and Mahometanism, and opposed Christianity. There stands in the regulations still the provision for the careful administration, by government officers, of all Hindoo and Mahometan endowments; and it was not without a most vigorous struggle at home, that the Court of Directors were compelled to alter their system. Honours were publicly paid by the British troops to Hindoo idols; and Sir Peregrine Maitland was compelled, for conscience' sake, to relinquish his command at Madras, rather than persist in the practice. Offerings were made (not long ago), in the name of Government, at celebrated shrines; Brahmans were paid to pray for rain; and worship was paid to the Hindoo goddess of Fortune for success on the Company's trade in salt and opium.

"Nor was this all. I have now before me the narrative (first published in England, I believe, in Wilkinson's *Christianity in Northern India*) of the conversion of a high-caste Sepoy, Prabdu Diu, a naiek or corporal of the 25th Regiment of Native Infantry. The excellent chaplain who baptized him (the late Rev. H. S. Fisher) was handed to the bishop (Bishop Middleton); the major commanding the regiment declared that the event had filled his corps with consternation. A Court of Inquiry was held under the orders of General Sir G. Martindell, and the guilty man removed from the army, though allowed to live on his pay. This was in 1819, when the Marquis of Hastings was Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief. The convert was admitted to be a fine soldier, and highly esteemed in the regiment, but he was never restored to the service. Since that time, missionaries have very seldom had opportunities of preaching to the Sepoys. It is understood that they are not to enter the lines; and, on the other hand, all the whims and superstitions of the soldiery have been honoured almost as if they were not men but children.

"But the Government proclaims not only that it will adhere to its strict neutrality, but also to its policy of 'respecting all the scruples of caste.' It gives this assurance in answer to an address from the Calcutta Baboos, of whom many have

'ceased to be Hindoos,' and few of whom allow these scruples of caste to interfere with their eating meat and drinking wine and brandy. I may be allowed, therefore, to regard it as a rather superfluous declaration.

"And how does it accord with 'strict neutrality?' To respect 'all the scruples of caste,' is virtually to uphold Hindooism. For what is caste? It is not a civil but a religious institution. Of the four original castes, the Vaisyas are extinct; the Khetriyas exist (if at all) in very small numbers; and it is not pretended that the Sudras are a pure class. It is known that they are descendants of all descriptions of impure and mixed races from intermarriages. The Brahmins alone exist as they were. The theory is, that they are divine—'twice born'—a race superior to all others in origin, in sanctity, and in natural rights; and this theory, which involves our acknowledgment that we are ourselves a defiled, polluted, and inferior race, we are called on to recognize and act upon.

"The Shastras, from the Veds downwards, are replete with texts like these. (I quote from an article in the *Calcutta Review*, by a learned author, who gives the original Sanscrit):—

"The Brahmins are our superiors.

"The Brahmins alone existed in the beginning.

"I have created the four castes according to their gratifications and acts.

"There sprang from Brahma's mouth beings endowed with the quality of goodness; others from his breast pervaded by the quality of foulness; others from his thighs, in whom foulness and darkness prevailed; and others from his feet, in whom the quality of darkness predominated. These were, in succession, beings of the several castes,—Brahmins, Khetriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras.

"The Brahmins are my mouth, the Khetriyas my arms, the Vaisyas my thighs, and the Sudras my feet. Their powers decrease in gradation.'

"Since the Brahman sprang from the most excellent parts, since he was first born, and since he possesses the Vede, he is by right the chief of this whole creation.'

"A Brahman, whether learned or ignorant, is a powerful divinity; even as fire is a powerful divinity, whether consecrated or popular.

"All Brahmins are excellent, and always to be honoured without discrimination, whether they are learned or unlearned. These excellent Brahmins, who are guilty of such crimes as theft, are offenders against themselves, not others.

"He who does not immediately bow down when he sees his tutor or a Brahman, or the image of a god, becomes a dog on the earth!

"Whoever bears but a drop of water which has been in contact with a Brahman's foot, all sins in his body are immediately destroyed. Whoever carries on his head the holy things touched by a Brahman's foot, verily, verily, I say he is freed from all sins.

"Even wicked Brahmins are to be venerated, but not Sudras, though of subdued passions. The cow that eats foul things is better than the pig with good dispositions.

"A king, even though dying from want, must not receive any tax from a Brahman learned in the Vedas.

"Never shall a king slay a Brahman, though convicted of all possible crimes.'

"These things illustrate the system. In its practical development, a man of low caste would 'scruple' to tell the truth in giving evidence, if truth affected a Brahman; and a Brahman would scruple to allow an inferior to read a sacred book. Indeed, by the Hindoo law, such sacrilege would entail on a Sudra the punishment of exquisite tortures.

"And, further, if the Governor-General himself were to touch the eating or drinking vessels of a Hindoo of caste, those vessels would be regarded as polluted. And probably the lower the man's caste might be, and the more ignorant the man, the more scrupulous he would be.

"And then a man's 'caste' forbids him to destroy animal life. Perforce, however, he does so every time he drinks water, or treads upon the ground. The grant of God after the deluge most significantly recognizes the right of man to animal food, and our New Testament as emphatically again recognizes the claim. But Hindooism commands to abstain from meats, not merely occasionally, but always, and imposes, as a religious duty, this obligation of abstinence.

"In practical life, of course, so unnatural a system fails. A Hindoo should not

wear leather shoes, or use leather for any purpose. And many medicines which are almost necessary, in some diseases, are equally forbidden to him. But he finds that, insensibly, he is led on by the progress of civilization, and that his scruples must give way. Then in steps the powerful British Government, and sanctions and encourages the maintenance of the absurd system, talks of its respect for these scruples, and stoops to a recognition of the theory which elevates the worthless Brahman to divinity, and treats the patient, industrious out-caste as an impure and degraded being!

"But the case of the Sepoys is peculiar. It is in reference to *their* disaffection that the Government offers these assurances. It is said that the Sepoys are jealous for their religion, and that their minds must be soothed. But how stands the fact? There is one class in the community to which no missions have been directed; one class which is almost entirely untouched; one class which has all along been jealously shielded from Christian instruction. That class is the body of Sepoys. Nearly all of them are from Oude, where there has never been a Christian mission. They go on furlough in great numbers yearly, and attend the shrines and temples where pilgrims resort, without let or hindrance. They are not sent out of India, in deference to their scruples. Of Christianity they ordinarily know nothing more than that it is the nominal religion of their officers, and they eat beef and drink wine. Whoever may have reason to complain that his religion has been interfered with, the Sepoy is not the man.

"But do they in fact say that they have reason to complain of missions? Not in the least. The mutiny first broke out at Berhampore. There is there a mission of the London Missionary Society. The 19th Native Infantry, when excited and under arms there, might with ease have destroyed the mission premises, and murdered the missionaries. They never threatened either. They were brought down to Barrackpore and disbanded; and, soon after, the 34th were disbanded there too. Both regiments were let loose on the country. Opposite Barrackpore is Serampore; a short way farther up is Chinsurah. At both places there are missions. The men went roving up the country. They passed an unprotected mission at Burdwan; they could easily have reached the equally unprotected mission stations at Kishnagar and Cutova. As they went on, they might have reached others. But they neither threatened or touched one of them. So at Meerut and Umballa. Before this outbreak there were preliminary symptoms of disaffection in various acts of incendiarism; but not one in the mission premises.

"But the most remarkable case is that of Benares, that bigoted 'sacred' city, with the head civil officer a zealous Christian, with a considerable body of active missionaries. Here were two disaffected native regiments, a Sikh corps, on which it was at first doubtful if reliance could be placed, and 200,000 people supposed to be impatient of missions. Yet up to this time, without any European force (the heroic Commissioner having pushed on to Cawnpore the first Europeans who went up the country), the city has been preserved in peace, and not a hair of the head of a single missionary has perished.

"Far be it from me to overlook, as the efficient cause of this, the guardian protecting care of Him whose these men are, and whom they serve. He has said—'Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.' And not only have these, His servants, sought His succour, but I know that the sympathies of others have called forth much prayer on their behalf. Most signally, in answer to these intercessions and supplications, He has manifested His restraining power, and His love to His own beloved people. But, at the same time, it is plain that if there were in the hearts of the population that animosity to missions which some suppose to exist, the missions would not have been overlooked by the disaffected in this way, and we should at least have some tokens of the popular ill-will.

"But another cause for the insurrection, and that which with the greatest probability is now surmised, is the secret work of Mahometan emissaries, instigated by the Princes of Lucknow and the Persians. This will probably be made plain ere long. One sign of it is the extensive diffusion of the same kind of stories—that Lord Canning was pledged to the Queen to make the people Christians in three years; that the English required the Sepoys to fight for them with the Russians in China and Persia; and that, in order to qualify them for leaving India, it was necessary first to destroy their caste, and that this was intended to be done by introducing a greased cartridge into general use. The Hindoos have been the first actors, but they

have been tools of others behind the scenes. We now see the crisis at Delhi; a son of the Mahometan pensioned king there placed on the throne; the Mussulmans all armed flocking to the green standard; a Mussulman chosen as leader; and prayer for success of the rebels offered in the Mussulman places of worship in various parts of the country. The result of this development will probably be the cordial union of the Hindoos in the Upper Provinces, and especially the Sikhs, in one power.

"I believe that we have no cause for fear as to the ultimate issue. England's mission has yet to be accomplished; and, for the sake of those among her people here who desire to win India to the Saviour, the victory will soon be given to our country; 'the holy seed is the substance thereof.' I believe farther, that this movement shows that the kingdom and powers of darkness are shaken; and farther still, that the banner of the False Prophet having now been raised, our Lord, for His own glory's sake, will overthrow the adversaries. And then, will not these events attract more attention to India? Shall we find henceforth that the inquiries of our Legislature into her condition will be limited to the appointment of a committee, as heretofore, only once in twenty years? Shall we not see the claims of India, the duty, the wisdom, and the true policy of enlightening her people, better understood and realized? And will not the mercy of the deliverance of our Indian empire from this sudden and imminent peril awaken the gratitude of all the Lord's people, and rouse them to exertion for India's welfare, while still she remains our own possession, and her gates are open to the gospel?"

AYR MISSIONARY MEETING.

THE Ayr Congregation of United Original Seceders held a half-yearly missionary meeting in their church, George Street, on the evening of Monday, the 29th June. The Rev. J. Robertson presided, and opened the meeting with praise and prayer.

The Chairman shortly stated the object of the meeting, and exhorted to perseverance in missionary effort. He said the want of a missionary, instead of inducing to give up prayer meetings and tract distribution, should rather stimulate to greater diligence in the use of those means, especially when so much infidel and immoral literature is in circulation amongst the masses.

The minutes of last meeting having been read and approved, the Secretary read the following report:—

"Your Home Mission Committee does not deem it necessary to present a lengthened or formal report of proceedings to the half-yearly missionary meeting of the congregation. Suffice it to say, that the district prayer meeting in Garden Street is still well attended, and continues under the charge of Messrs Miller and Jamieson, and the circulation of tracts is kept up with almost its former vigour and regularity, from various sources, some of which are unknown to your Committee. Four distributors have discontinued the work; but, except in one instance, the vacated districts have been taken up by the other distributors; and arrangements have been made with the view of having that one supplied.

"Since last annual meeting, a selection has been made from the tracts issued by Mr Drummond, of Stirling, and put into circulation, along with those formerly received from the London Tract Society. Your Committee also receives fifty copies per month of the *Gospel Trumpet*—a publication commenced by Mr Drummond at the beginning of the present year. It is in form more like a newspaper than a tract, and is printed in a large, clear type, well adapted for the aged, or such as cannot read well. The articles in it are short, pointed, and practical, and well fitted to arrest the attention. They are very much liked by the people. The want of a missionary has, of course, suspended the principal part of the work; and the comparatively silent operations still in force cannot be expected to excite so much interest, nor furnish so many topics for a report. For these reasons, however, it is all the more necessary to bring the subject of the mission before the congregation, and the body generally, in order to keep alive the feeling that the Church is bound, so soon as Providence furnishes the means and agents, to carry the gospel to those in our native land who have lapsed into a state of practical infidelity or heathenism, and by all scriptural means compel them to come into Christ's fold. The tract

distributors also demand and deserve encouragement and aid. Deprived of the leadership of a missionary, to whose work theirs was merely auxiliary, their duties have now become pre-eminently a work of faith and labour of love. The good seed scattered by them with a gentle hand may be equally gentle and noiseless in its operation on the hearts of the people; and, failing to see any immediate fruits of their labours, hope deferred may sicken their hearts, and, unless supported by the prayers and sympathies of the congregation, make them feel disposed to give up the work in despair. Let us, therefore, strengthen them by our prayers, and be encouraged ourselves to perseverance in the work, from the fact that God has often made the feeblest instrumentality accomplish the greatest results. The returned captives, though poor and despised in the eyes of men, 'by the good hand of their God upon them,' were able to build their much-loved temple, and surround the city of their father's sepulchres with walls and bulwarks, in spite of able and malignant foes—yea, even by the aid of those who sought to hinder them. The same God who gave them favour in the eyes of a heathen despot can send us help out of His holy hill, and put it into the hearts of some sons amongst us to devote themselves to His service in this honourable but arduous work. The prospect meanwhile does not offer much encouragement; but let us hope against hope. As the deepest darkness of night usually precedes the daybreak, so the realization of our fond wishes may be nearest when the indications are most unpromising. 'Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.'

The Rev. James Smellie, Stranraer, moved the adoption of the report in an exceedingly able and eloquent speech, which we regret we cannot give at length, as all our readers would have derived both pleasure and profit from its perusal. He began by congratulating the Ayr congregation on the faithfulness and zeal with which they had laboured in the field of evangelic effort. While holding fast the truth, they had not forgotten the kindred duty to hold it forth. They had shown that a faithful adherence to their distinctive principles was quite compatible with strenuous endeavours to extend the cause of the Redeemer around them. In this they had set a praiseworthy example, which other congregations in the body, according to their ability and opportunity, would do well to follow. He then went on to express his sympathy with the congregation in the loss of their late excellent missionary, and in their inability hitherto to find a substitute. He expressed his gratification to hear that the congregation was doing what it could to supply the lack by holding prayer meetings, and carrying on tract distribution in their missionary district. He encouraged them, in remarks of some length, to continue the distribution of tracts. It was the work Providence seemed at present to be specially laying to their hand. It was a work in which all could take a part—old and young—the delicate and strong—those of less and those of greater ability. It was a work peculiarly needed at the present time to counteract the worthless and demoralizing publications which are circulating in shoals, and eagerly devoured by the lower classes of society. And it was a work which had been, and might yet be, attended with the most blessed results. He exhorted them to continue in this work, prayerfully, believingly, and with earnest desires for the conversion of souls. He showed what good might be done if each tract distributor would single out one family or one individual, and make their salvation the subject of special persevering effort and prayer. In conclusion, he encouraged the congregation to perseverance in missionary work, by the beneficial reflex influence which such work was calculated to have on themselves. There was a lake, he said, in Palestine: its waters were fresh and pure—the abode of abundance of fish; its banks were clothed in green, and enameled with lovely flowers; the most healthful and exhilarating breezes played around it. That was the sea of Galilee, which received the waters of the Jordan, and gave them forth in all their fullness. There was another lake: its waters were dead, stagnant, and unwholesome: no fish lived in them; nothing but desolation and sterility reigned around its shores. That was the Dead Sea, which received the waters of the Jordan, but gave nothing out. So is it with professing Christians. Those who seek to impart to others the privileges they themselves possess will be like the sea of Galilee—a beauty and a blessing, in the freshness and vitality of their Christianity: those who selfishly keep all their privileges to themselves will be like the Dead Sea—a curse rather than a blessing. The reverend gentleman concluded his impressive address by heartily moving the adoption of the report.

The motion was seconded by Bailie Paterson, and unanimously agreed to.

The following resolutions were also proposed, seconded, and unanimously agreed to :—

"That, as the spiritual instruction of the whole human family has been intrusted to the Church by its Great Head, all the sections into which it has been sadly divided are bound to put forth every effort to fulfil His great commission. This congregation, therefore, resolves, with the sanction of Synod, to countenance and aid mission work as God in His good providence may be pleased to furnish the means and opportunity."

"That, as our present position prevents us from sending missionaries to distant lands, where the expenses are necessarily greater than our resources could bear, and as a growing necessity exists for still greater efforts being made to reclaim the outcasts at home, this congregation resolves to continue the home mission, and respectfully solicits the assistance of the rest of the congregations in the body to procure the services of a missionary."

After passing these resolutions, the Rev. James Smellie closed the meeting with devotional exercises and the benediction.

We trust the appeal in the second resolution will be attended to by the congregations in the body, and that it will be put into the heart of some one to respond speedily to the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us."

MEETING OF THE UNITED ORIGINAL SECESSION SYNOD.

At Adam Square Church, Edinburgh,
18th August, 1857.

THE Synod of United Original Seceders met, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. John Robertson, Ayr, from Psalm cxxii. 6—"They shall prosper that love thee."

After sermon, the Synod was constituted with prayer by Mr Robertson, Moderator. The roll being called, the following members answered to their names:—The Rev. Thomas Manson, Perth; Rev. Professor Murray, Glasgow; Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh; Rev. John Graham, Kilmarnock; Rev. George Stevenson, Kilwinning; Rev. George Roger, Auchinleck; Rev. John Robertson, Ayr; Rev. Dr Blakely, Kirkintilloch; Rev. James Smellie, Stranraer; Rev. W. F. Aitken, Midlem; Rev. Robert Craig, Kirriemuir; Rev. John Ritchie, Shottaburn; Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, junr., Thurso; Rev. William Robertson, Dundee; Rev. Thomas Hobart, Carlisle; Rev. John Barr, Coupar-Angus; and Rev. John M'Kay, Aberdeen;—with Peter Ross, Perth; John Smith, Glasgow; William Lindsay, Edinburgh; David Milligan, Ayr; Adam Bell, Kirkintilloch; John Gowanlock, Midlem; and George Jack, Dundee—ruling elders. A question being raised, on making up the roll, as to whether the name of the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh, should be put upon the roll; after conversation, the Synod agreed that his name should appear on the roll. The Synod also agreed that the name of W. Lindsay, elder, Edinburgh, should appear on the roll. It was reported by the Presbytery of Perth and Aberdeen that the Rev. John Aitken, of Aberdeen, the father of the Synod, had been removed by death since last meeting of Synod, and his name was dropped from the roll. It was agreed to appoint a committee, consisting of Mr Manson, Mr Roger, and Dr Blakely, to draw up a letter of condolence, to be transmitted to the family of the deceased. It was proposed and agreed to, that the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, senr., Colmonell, should be appointed Moderator, in the room of Mr Robertson. Mr Ritchie not being present, it was agreed that Mr Robertson should occupy the chair till the evening sederunt. Appointed the following members a Committee of Bills and Overtures, viz., the Moderator, Mr Manson, Professor Murray, Mr Roger, Dr Blakely, Mr Smellie, and Mr Craig; with Peter Ross, John Smith, and John Gowanlock, ruling elders,—the Committee to meet in the adjoining session-house at six o'clock evening. The Synod agreed to take up the protest of the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh, formerly laid on the Synod's table, at the evening sederunt, and to inquire of Mr Brown whether he had obtemperated the Synod's deed of suspension ament that protest. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at half-past 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, half-past 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the addition of the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, Colmonell; Rev. James Smith, Pollockshaws; and Rev. Robert Brash, Birsay;—with James Meldrum, Colmonell; John Harwood, Kilwinning; and Thomas Brownlee, Pollockshaws—ruling elders. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved of. The Rev E. Ritchie, Colmonell, having declined to take the chair, the Rev. James Smith, Pollockshaws, was elected Moderator. The Clerk gave in the Report of the Committee of Bills and Overtures, which was approved. The Synod proceeded to take up the protest of the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh, laid on the Synod's table at its last meeting, and to inquire of Mr Brown whether he had obtemperated the Synod's deed of suspension, of which in former minutes. The Clerk read the minutes of last meeting of Synod in regard to the case, including the decision of the Synod, against which Mr Brown protested, Mr Brown's protest, and the deed of Synod suspending Mr Brown from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions till the present meeting of Synod. The Moderator having asked Mr Brown whether he had obtemperated the decision of the Synod anent his suspension, Mr Brown replied that he had not obtemperated that decision. It was then moved and agreed to, that the Synod proceed to take up Mr Brown's protest. Mr Brown was heard in support of the protest. The hour of adjournment being come, it was agreed to resume the further consideration of the case to-morrow forenoon. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 19th August, 1857, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. Minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Resumed consideration of the protest of the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh, of which in former minutes. Mr Brown having been heard at last night's sederunt, was declared to be removed. The members of Court then proceeded to deliver their mind in the order of the roll. After lengthened discussion, it was moved by Dr Blakely, and seconded by Mr Smellie, "That the Synod, having taken into consideration the protest of the Rev. Archibald Brown, against the decision May 22d, anent the supply of his pulpit, find that the protest is wholly irregular, incompetent, and contumacious, inasmuch as in that protest he denies the validity of the Court, and appeals to a future meeting of the same Court; that in said protest he declares his resolution to disobey the decision of Synod, and has since admitted in Court that disobedience; the Synod agrees to reject the protest, and to suspend Mr Brown *sine die* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions." Mr Ritchie, Colmonell, also moved, and was seconded by Mr Brash, "That, since a libel has been served against Mr Brown, and ought to be proved, even though he decline the authority of the Court, or do not appear, I move that the Synod do not specify what degree of censure be pronounced at present against him for his protest, declining the authority of the Synod; till we have considered the libel." It was further moved by Mr Roger, and seconded by Mr Craig, "That the Synod, having taken into its deliberate and serious consideration the protest of the Rev. A. Brown, find that the protest, both in its nature and grounds, is irregular, informal, and unconstitutional, and therefore resolves to reject the protest, and ordains that it be erased from the records of the Court; but, inasmuch as the Synod agreed at its last meeting to take up the libel against Mr Brown this day, the Synod agrees to delay pronouncing censure against Mr Brown till to-morrow evening's sederunt. It was agreed that the first and third motions should be first put to the vote; and the roll being called and votes marked, 11 voted for the first motion, and 6 for the third. It was then agreed that the first motion should be put against the second; and the roll being called and votes marked, 12 voted for the first motion, and 8 for the second. The first motion was accordingly declared to be carried; wherefore the Synod did, and hereby do, in terms of said motion, agree to suspend the Rev. Archibald Brown, Edinburgh, *sine die* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions, and appoint the Moderator to intimate the same to Mr Brown. Against this decision Mr Ritchie, Colmonell, Mr Smith, Mr Brash, and Mr Ritchie, Thurso, with Thomas Brownlee and John Harwood, elders, dissented,

in terms of Mr Ritchie's motion; Mr John Ritchie, and Mr Hobart, dissented in terms of Mr Roger's motion; and Mr Stevenson and Mr John Smith, elder, for reasons to be afterwards given in. It was agreed to delay the formal intimation of the decision to Mr Brown till the evening sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at 7 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, 7 o'clock p.m.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. It was now agreed that the decision come to in the case of the Rev. Archibald Brown, Edinburgh, at the forenoon sederunt, be intimated to Mr Brown. Mr Smith, the Moderator, having stated, that as he had dissented from said decision, he could not consistently intimate that decision to Mr Brown, and requested the Synod to appoint another member to take the chair for performing this business. The Synod granted Mr Smith's request, and appointed the former Moderator, the Rev. John Robertson, Ayr, to take the chair. Mr Robertson, having taken the chair, then intimated the decision of Synod to Mr Brown, and, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the alone King and Head of the Church, suspended him *sine die* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions, with suitable exhortations. Upon this being done, Mr Brown read in presence of the Court, and laid on the table, a protest against the decision which had been presently intimated to him, and the sentence of suspension which had been pronounced upon him, and took instruments and craved extracts. After conversation, the Synod, considering it had been agreed to at last meeting of Synod to take up this day the libel which it had appointed to be served on Mr Brown, agreed to allow the protest to lie on the table, and to delay giving judgment upon it till a future sederunt, and in the meantime proceeded to take up the libel which had been served upon Mr Brown. The Clerk stated, that in consequence of this sentence which had now been passed upon Mr Brown, it was necessary that the Synod should appoint one of its number to preach to the congregation of Adam Square on Sabbath first, and to intimate the sentence pronounced on Mr Brown to the congregation. The Synod agreed to the proposal, but delayed the appointment of a member till a future sederunt.

The Synod then proceeded to take up the libel which had been served on Mr Brown at the instance of the Synod. The officer was directed to intimate to Mr Brown that the Synod was about to proceed to take up the libel, and Mr Brown came into the Court, and gave in answers to the libel. Printed copies of the libel, together with Mr Brown's answers, were then delivered to the members of Court. The libel was read; the answers of Mr Brown were also read, down to reason second, page 19. The hour of adjournment being come, it was agreed to resume the consideration of this case at the forenoon sederunt to-morrow. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 20th August, 10 a.m.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. The Synod agreed to take up the petition of the congregation of Millhill, parish of Olig, Caithness, under the inspection of the Rev. James M'Beath, applying for union with this Synod. The petition was read by the Clerk. The Rev. Mr M'Beath was heard in support of the petition. The members of Court having delivered their minds at length, and expressed their gratification at receiving this application, it was moved, and unanimously agreed to, that the application for union, on the part both of Mr M'Beath and the congregation, with this Synod, be cordially acceded to; and remit to the Presbytery of Perth and Aberdeen to take the necessary steps for the formal admission of Mr M'Beath and the congregation into connection with this Synod; and appoint the Rev. James Smith, Moderator of Synod, to act along with the Presbytery on that occasion.

Resumed consideration of the libel served on Mr Brown, left unfinished at last night's sederunt. The remaining part of Mr Brown's answers was read. At this stage it was moved and agreed to, that no member of Court should leave this meeting of Synod without asking and obtaining liberty through the Moderator. The

libel, and answers to the libel by Mr Brown, having been read, it was found that the answers had been addressed to the parties signing the libel, as if they were the prosecutors in this case, whereas, according to the terms of the libel, the Synod is the prosecutor. Mr Brown gave the following explanation of this fact :—"That he conceived that the libel was at the instance of the parties signing it, and, therefore, he had addressed his answers to them, which he now finds he ought to have addressed to the Synod." The Synod accepted this explanation. After lengthened discussion, the following motion was proposed and agreed to :—"The Synod, considering that formal replies require to be given to the answers of Mr Brown, and the impracticability of giving a mature and deliberate judgment on the libel at its present meeting, and considering, also, the extreme inconvenience, after so many meetings of Synod this year already, of having another before its ordinary meeting in May, agrees to delay the further consideration of this libel till that meeting." Appointed next meeting of Synod to be held in Main Street Church, Glasgow, on the Monday after the third Sabbath of May next, at half-past 6 o'clock evening, and that the business of the libel be taken up on the forenoon of the Tuesday following. The Synod appointed the replies to Mr Brown's answers, by its committee, to be printed and transmitted to the members of Court as soon as practicable. Ayr and Glasgow Presbyteries asked and obtained leave to meet at the close of the present sederunt. The Committee of Bills was appointed to meet in the adjoining session-house, at a quarter before 6 o'clock this evening. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. The Synod agreed to resolve itself into a committee of the whole house to receive papers, as the Committee of Bills and Overtures did not meet, as appointed, in the interval, when Mr Robertson took the chair. The following papers were given in :—1st, Overture from several members of Court, regarding the rescinding of the resolution of Synod anent Sabbath Schools, passed in May, 1856 ; and, 2d, Petition from the congregation of Adam Square, Edinburgh. The papers were read by the Clerk ; and, after conversation, it was agreed to transmit them. The Synod resumed, and the Clerk gave in the report of the committee, as above, which was approved.

Proceeded to take up the protest of the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh, laid on the table by him at last night's sederunt, against the sentence of suspension pronounced upon him by the Synod, and which the Synod had agreed should lie on the table. The Clerk read the protest, which is as follows :—

"Forasmuch as although Wednesday, the 19th August, 1857, was appointed by the Synod to adjudicate upon a libel served upon me, founded upon my pamphlet recently published, entitled 'The Revival of Family Religion in opposition to the Sabbath School Scheme,' the Synod has pronounced a sentence of suspension upon me *sine die* (while that libel is still pending) from my ministerial and judicial functions—a sentence grounded on my protest and appeal, lying upon the Synod's table, against a sentence suspending me from the exercise of my ministry in my own congregation, for which the following reasons were brought before the Court :—1st, That said sentence was given in favour of a complaining minority against the majority of my congregation. 2d, That it was given in favour of a minority, complaining that I had displeased them, not by departing from our public profession, but by preaching, praying, and publishing, for the revival of family religion, within and without the Church, against the Sabbath school scheme, as a modern defection from a covenanted cause, according to our judicial testimony. 3d, That it was passed by a small minority of the representatives of this body. 4th, That it was passed when not a single ruling elder was present, with the exception of one—a party in the case. I hereby protest, in my own name, and that of my congregation, that, notwithstanding said sentence of suspension, it shall be lawful and warrantable for me to exercise my ministry as a minister of the Reformed and Covenanted Church of Scotland, of which the Synod of United Original Seceders professes to be a part, under the judicial testimony of that body, as that testimony stands for all the scriptural principles and attainments of that Church : That I shall still hold communion with ministers, elders, and people of that body, according to that constitutional anti-voluntary testimony, in its application to the family as well as the state ; and that, if any minister or probationer shall attempt to exercise any part of my pastoral work, he shall be held and reputed as unjustly and violently intruding upon my ministerial labours ; and I hereby appeal to the first free and reforming meeting of the Synod of United Original Seceders, when any reasonable hope may be entertained of the grievances of which I complain being redressed. I take instruments and crave extracts.

"(Signed) ARCHIBALD BROWN.

"Edinburgh, Adam Square, 19th August, 1857."

The members of Court having delivered their minds in the order of the roll, after lengthened consideration, the Synod agreed to appoint a committee—consisting of Mr Ritchie, senr., Mr Graham, Mr Roger, and Mr Hobart—to converse with Mr Brown, with a view to his withdrawing his protest. The committee retired, and, on their return, reported that they had held a friendly conversation with Mr Brown, who stated that he could not withdraw his protest.

After serious and painful deliberation upon the whole case, it was moved and seconded, "That the Synod, having considered the protest of the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh, declare that it is not only irregular and informal, but unconstitutional, and involving contumacy, and such as in certain circumstances would warrant the Synod to pass one of the severest sentences which the Church can inflict; yet, as this Synod is earnestly desirous to adopt every means within its power to gain Mr Brown, and would refrain from the exercise of the highest censures of the Church, where that can be done in a consistency with fidelity to the Head of the Church, the Synod agrees to delay coming to a final decision in regard to the protest till the next meeting of Synod, with certification, that should Mr Brown be found to have persevered in violating the sentence of suspension, he shall then be declared to be no longer a minister of this Church." It was also moved and seconded, "That the Synod, having considered and expressed disapprobation of Mr Brown's protest, agree to delay determining what sentence they will pass upon him for it till next meeting in May, and till the libel has been adjudicated upon." It was agreed to put the motions to the vote. Before taking the vote, Mr Ritchie, senr., engaged in prayer. The vote was then stated 1st and 2d motion; and the roll being called and votes marked, 14 voted for the first motion, and 6 for the second. The first motion was accordingly declared to be carried, and the Synod resolved in terms thereof. The Synod instructed the Clerk to transmit an extract of this minute to Mr Brown. Mr Smellie, Mr John Ritchie, and Mr M'Kay, with Peter Ross, asked and obtained liberty to leave the Synod. The Ayr and Perth and Aberdeen Presbyteries asked and obtained leave to meet, the former at the close of the present sederunt, and the latter at half-past 9 o'clock to-morrow morning. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 21st August, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the exception of Mr Smellie, Mr John Ritchie, and Mr John M'Kay, with Peter Ross, ruling elder. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Appointed the Rev. Robert Craig to preach to the congregation of Adam Square, Edinburgh, on Sabbath first, and to intimate the decision of the Synod in the case of the Rev. A. Brown. Appointed also Mr Roger and Mr Barr to dispense the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in that congregation on the fourth Sabbath of October. Agreed that the Rev. Thomas Hobart be transferred *pro tempore* from Glasgow to Edinburgh Presbytery, and appointed the Edinburgh Presbytery to meet at the close of the present sederunt. A reference being made by several members of Court to the Ferguson Bequest; after conversation, it was agreed that a memorial be drawn up, and the following members, viz., the Moderator, Professor Murray, Mr Graham, Mr Stevenson, Mr Roger, and Dr Blakely, be appointed a committee, the Moderator to be convener, to present the memorial to the Trustees and Superintendent of the Bequest, and to confer with them as to what interest the Synod had therein. The Treasurer of the Magazine reported to the Synod that the Committee of Management had resolved to decline acceptance of the £30, so liberally voted by last Synod by way of loan, to put the Magazine on a good working footing, and that they had also resolved to use all the means in their power to make the Magazine support itself; and they earnestly hope that they would be supported in this by every minister of the body, by their using their influence to promote its circulation in their respective localities. The Synod unanimously expressed their satisfaction with this report, and recommended that this important means of bringing our principles before the world should receive all the countenance and support which they could command. An account having been presented to the Synod by the

Rev. A. Brown for the printing of his answers to the libel, it was agreed that, in respect of the payment of said account, the usual course in such cases should be followed. Proceeded to consider the state of the supplies. After lengthened deliberation upon the whole subject, it was agreed to appoint a committee—consisting of the Moderator, Mr Manson, Mr Roger, Dr Blakely, and Mr Hobart—to prepare the draft of a scheme in regard to the matter, to be in readiness to be presented to next meeting of Synod; and, in the meantime, instruct the Committee to insert in the Magazine the appointments as issued, stating at intervals who are unable to fulfil them. It was further agreed that ministers should supply the vacancies in rotation; and the committee were instructed to commence at the top of the roll. Mr Manson and Mr Roger were appointed to take charge of the supplies till next meeting of Synod. Agreed that the overture regarding the rescinding of the resolution anent Sabbath Schools should lie on the table till next meeting of Synod. Perth and Aberdeen and Ayr Presbyteries asked and obtained leave to meet at the close of the present sederunt. Agreed that the minutes of this meeting of Synod be inserted in full in the Magazine. After engaging in prayer and praise, and intimating that the next meeting of Synod would be held in Glasgow, on the Monday after the third Sabbath of May, 1858, at half-past 6 o'clock evening, the Moderator concluded the Synod by pronouncing the Apostolic benediction.

PRESENTATION.

On the evening of Tuesday, the 14th July, the Ayr Congregation held a friendly meeting, to honour their pastor, the Rev. John Robertson. The majority of the congregation was present. Bailie Paterson occupied the chair. After engaging in praise and prayer, which the Rev. James Smellie, Stranraer, conducted, the Chairman called on Mr James Miller to discharge the pleasant duty for which the meeting had been called. This he did in a speech neat, appropriate, and eloquent, describing in a graphic manner the personal excellencies and abundant labours of Mr Robertson, which had endeared him to his congregation, and called forth the present expression of esteem, in the substantial form of a purse containing fifty sovereigns, which, in their name, he had put into his hand. The purse, a beautiful piece of work, was made by the hands of a young lady in the congregation. Mr Robertson made a feeling and very appropriate acknowledgment. He adverted, with gratitude to God, to the many mercies he had enjoyed since called to take the oversight of the congregation. He said he doubtless had met with trials, but the mercies he had enjoyed far outnumbered them, and none of his afflictions had come from his congregation. From its members he had always received the utmost courtesy and kindness, and with them he had enjoyed the blessing of concord and peace since his settlement. He begged to thank his congregation most heartily for the valuable present, and the kind manner in which it had been bestowed. The Rev. George Roger, Auchinleck, next addressed the meeting on "What are the Elements which enter into the Stability and Extension of a Congregation?" We could have wished to give an outline of his address; but the topics he took up were so numerous, that space forbids us to do so. The Rev. James Smellie, Stranraer, gave a short address on the spirit in which the mutual duties of pastor and people ought to be discharged. After passing votes of thanks to the reverend gentlemen and to the Chairman for their valuable services, the meeting sang the 133d Psalm, and the very pleasant proceedings were terminated by Mr Roger pronouncing the Apostolic benediction.

OBITUARY.

DIED—At Midlem Manse, on Tuesday, the 21st of July last, the Rev. John Aitken, Aberdeen, the father of the United Original Secession Synod. A memoir of this venerable and much beloved servant of Christ is expected to be given in an early number.

THE
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THE TRAINING OF YOUTH.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," is not only an inspired proverb and promise, but likewise a mandate—a mandate issued from that court whence there is no appeal. Nor needs there. There is no possibility of either mistaken policy or mal-administration there. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" And woe be to that family or community, civil or ecclesiastical, where the training of youth is habitually neglected! It contains within itself the elements of its own destruction, requiring only time for development, and the permissive warrant of the Highest to precipitate the whole into the depths of irretrievable ruin. Indeed, strictly speaking, there is not, and cannot possibly be, such a thing in this world as the non-training of the young. Trained they must inevitably be, either for the better or the worse. There is no neutrality here. Either they are trained laboriously and diligently in the path of rectitude and holiness, or they are being trained with dreadful success, under the experienced and skilful direction of Satan, in the path that leads to eternal, and it may be to temporal, ruin. The neglect of this sacred and important duty by those upon whom its discharge legitimately devolves, necessarily involves in it the transferring of the work into the hands of Satan, in so far as their agency can effect such a result. This is one of those laws of God which brook no violation without the infliction of retribution. Were it possible, indeed, for either human or satanic agency, or both combined, to outrage and subvert the laws of God at their pleasure with impunity—with all reverence, we say, were such a thing possible, God would cease to be God—He would cease to be the Almighty, doing according to his will among the inhabitants of this earth as well as in the armies of heaven. It would not only drive Jehovah from the throne of universal empire, but would likewise reduce the world into the condition of a wandering star, reserved to the blackness of darkness for ever. But blessed be God this can never be. The very

existence of the unchangeable and eternal Jehovah is a sufficient guarantee against this. The laws established by God, whether in nature, providence, or grace, are so beneficent in their nature, and so perfect in their adaptation—securing that what is most for the glory of God is likewise best for man—that any systematic infraction or violation of them must necessarily draw down a dreadful but righteous retribution on the offenders, be they who they may, whether individuals, families, churches, or nations. With regard to the latter community, we would say, that as well may an individual think to outrage or violate with impunity those laws established by the God of nature for the promotion of the health of the natural body, as may a nation or civil community think to outrage and violate with impunity those laws established by the God of providence for conserving the health of the body politic. “Them that honour me I will honour, but they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed,” is a universal principle in the administration of Him who is governor among the nations; of which none in a Christian country may plead ignorance, and which none may reasonably deny, seeing it is attested and illustrated throughout the whole volume of inspiration, and the whole record of the past history of the world. Does not the very sepulchral silence of the mighty nations of old proclaim the truth of what we are advancing as with trumpet tongue? Ask of Egypt, or Assyria, or Rome, and with one voice they answer, that the worm at the root of their gourd was, that God was not acknowledged by them according to his due. And God is as jealous of his glory now as He was on the day when the Egyptian host was floundering amid the waves of the Red Sea, or when Cyrus entered triumphant the haughty Chaldean capital. If statesmen will utterly ignore the Almighty in their legislative and administrative assemblies, what else have they to expect but that He will leave them to follow their own devices, with all the indescribable, inconceivable miseries which that implies? And where is the Cabinet in this world—that of Britain included—where the glory of God is made the chief end of its deliberations? The first question in the *Shorter Catechism* is quite transposed here. Instead of being the first in the catechism of modern statesmen—either as regards arrangement or importance—it is the last. The glory of God with them is only the *end* of all, inasmuch as it is the *last* of all. And shall this be persisted in with impunity? No, verily! A day of righteous retribution will come sooner or later; it must come: the word of God himself is pledged to it. Nay, is it not already apparent in the world—aye, in our own land,—in manifestations of sad demoralization! and may not this also be read in the disastrous and heart-rending events which have just transpired in our Indian Empire? O, that the ears of our nation were unstopped to hear the solemn and loud peal of warning with which this terrible dispensation is fraught! It is truly lamentable to see a nation, rulers and people, when visited by a judicial social calamity, pointing unmistakably to the sin procuring it—trying every wretched shift, and looking for deliverance from any or every quarter except that whence deliverance only can come,—the calamity itself engrossing all the attention and con-

cern, and the sin which has procured it never causing a single pang. There is little hope of anything like genuine reformation so long as this is the case.

Statesmen, aye, and Churchmen too, of the present day appear as if they had just awakened from a sound sleep of a hundred or a hundred and fifty years' duration; and, as the charm of Morpheus passes off, they begin to discover, by the glimmerings of returning reason, that they are in the midst of "a sea of troubles"—that they are involved in a labyrinth of social evils, to the cause of which they are altogether oblivious, the magnitude or extent of which they cannot estimate, and a remedy for which they are wholly unable to prescribe. Happy ignorance! But stay; in the British ear we proclaim the fact that the whole of these evils—and there may be more in store for us—we say the whole of these social evils are the native but bitter fruit of our national apostacy. What! "do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Shall not men reap as they sow? Then why start back aghast at the work of our own hands, "as if some strange thing had happened to us?" We say again, that these covenanted lands of ours, and the Reformed Churches there, will be held responsible to God for this most distressing state of matters. And we venture to predict, that so long as reformers in this department of the social fabric take carnal policy or truckling expediency for their guide, instead of the Word of God, they need expect nothing else but bitter disappointment and defeat.

Much has been heard of late about plans for reclaiming the juvenile portion of the so-called outcast classes of the community—(outcast, in this highly privileged, Christian land!—why is this?—what has the Church been doing?)—and the necessity, in order to stem the tide of juvenile delinquency that threatens to inundate our native land, of having a national system of education. This seems at present to be a species of popular social panacea. Now, without the least intention or desire to detract from the value of education (which, when sanctified, is one of the choicest earthly blessings), still we question whether any system could be devised which would effectually overtake those very parties for whom it is chiefly intended, who are most in want of it, and to whom it should be the greatest boon. Of this, however, we feel perfectly confident—that no system of merely secular education, even though it should be a national system, will ever heal the moral maladies of society. Aye, the State itself will be found insufficient to grapple with this foe. If ever this victory be won, it must be won by the use of weapons which we look for in vain in the armoury of the State. The State has its sphere assigned to it in this work no doubt—a sphere subordinate to the Church, which is the divinely appointed agency for regenerating the world, whether viewed as societies or individuals.

If the evils now so loudly, bitterly, and justly complained of were traced to their source, they would be found to arise from the unwarrantable and unscriptural encroachments of the State on the liberties and constitution of the Church on the one hand, and the supine, servile subjection of the Church to the encroachments and

fetters of the State on the other. Were this the time and place, it were no difficult task to show how the social evils now complained of are traceable to the defection and apostacy of the Church and nation. We may just remark, generally, in passing, that for a long time past the State seems to have done its utmost to render the Church as inefficient as possible. Especially since the Revolution Settlement the State has pressed upon the Church like an incubus, circumscribing her usefulness, impairing her vigour, and fettering her operations by tyrannical and unscriptural laws. On the other hand, the Church has yielded to these : at one time accepting from the civil power what she ought resolutely to have rejected, and at another accepting from the civil power, as an act of grace, what she ought to have demanded as her inalienable right ; and, above all, and to crown all, her terribly culpable carelessness about the purity of doctrine, as well as laxity in the administration of the discipline of Christ's house. Many of her own acts have been such as to promise nothing but mischief, and have produced only mischief. The primary result of this defection has been to thrust from her pale the very parties who were at once her truest friends, and the most enlightened patriots, as they were the firm defenders of Bible truth. We regret to add the children of these parties have widely different characteristics in some of these respects. Meantime, by this process of winnowing and defection together, that power and influence which she at one time possessed in the land has been transferred to those—once her friends, now her greatest enemies—who, in the plenitude of their wisdom, consider that they have discovered the cause of those evils which have preyed upon the vitals of the Church like a cancer ; and, from the extreme of Erastianism, they have rushed headlong to the extreme of Voluntaryism, denouncing any connection between Church and State as pregnant with evil, only evil, and that continually, to the Church. (As we are engaged with Voluntaryism at present, we may just stay a moment here to award the *credit* (?) of the present happy and morally prosperous state of society to that beneficial and enlightened principle to which we consider it is chiefly due. These are the first fruits of it, as was predicted many years ago by those who knew their Bibles, at least, if they were not skilled in carnal policy.) Thus it is that the mighty influence which the Church at one time possessed in this land, and might, nay, should, have exerted for the maintenance of reformation principles, with all their concomitant good, has, partly by the State, partly by herself, and partly by her enemies, been wholly sacrificed ; and behold the result in the present disjointed, cross-drawing state of society in these reformed, covenanted, Protestant lands ! Instead of the civil and ecclesiastical powers being mutually helpful to each other, they are, on the contrary, working at cross purposes. We must have done with this if we are, as a people, to serve the end of our existence, and enjoy the blessing of God, and all the temporal and spiritual good which it must necessarily bring along with it. If statesmen would begin the work of reformation at the right end, let them take the fingers of the State out of the neck of the Church, and leave her to the exercise of that scriptural freedom with which she

is endowed by her exalted King and Head, and let the State do its part of the work in concert with the Church doing her part; and, like the dry bones in the valley of vision, all the different parts of the body politic will naturally fall into the places adapted for them—"bone will come to his bone;" then sinews, flesh, and skin, shall appear upon them, requiring only an outpouring of the breath of the Lord to infuse life into them—even that life which imparts to the present state of being all the value it possesses.

In the meantime, however, and as there is little prospect at present of matters taking this most desirable turn, the training of the youth must not be neglected. Time and eternity alike imperatively demand that the discharge of this duty be promptly and sedulously attended to.

Even with respect to those concerns circumscribed by the comparatively narrow limits of a present sphere of existence, the training of the young is a matter of sufficient magnitude and importance to engage the anxious, heartfelt solicitude of any inspired by enough of patriotism and philanthropy to take any interest either in the good of their country, or in the happiness and well-being of their fellow-countrymen. For it is a truth, attested at once by revelation and universal experience and observation, that the moral and intellectual, as well as the material part of creation, have been dreadfully blasted, nay, destroyed, by the withering, pernicious blight of sin; with this difference, indeed, that in proportion as the soul exceeds the material world in value, in that proportion do the effects of the deadly blight of sin on the soul transcend in degree the effects of the curse of sin on the world of matter. Every species of vile, poisonous plant is indigenous to the soil of the unrenewed human heart, and requires only non-interference to ensure an abundant harvest against the day of wrath. Not one good or virtuous principle or emotion is to be found there by nature, for "the imagination of the thoughts of man are only evil, and that continually;" again, "the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Indeed, if left to himself, man would soon—very soon, notwithstanding his reason, "that camp of God in man"—degenerate so far as to be but little removed above the lower irrational creatures. If proof were required for this statement, we should only have to refer to the inhabitants of those benighted regions of the earth where ignorance covers the land, and gross darkness the people. And, in consequence of man's moral and intellectual nature being thus impaired, it becomes absolutely necessary that he be not only taught in, but trained to, the discharge of even those domestic or social duties devolving upon him, whether as a member of a family or a member of the civil community. As we do not intend, however, to prosecute this branch of the subject at any length, we shall dispose of it in a few general observations.

It is a generally received adage, "that the child is father to the man." If there be any truth in this, it natively follows, from what we have stated, that if we are to have "*good*," useful members of society, it is not only necessary that the young shall receive a competent amount of instruction in the various branches of secular knowledge—such as shall enable them to transact business, or earn a livelihood for

themselves and those whom Providence may render dependent upon them (the *ne plus ultra* of a class of short-sighted, theorising, social reformers of the present day, some of them with high-sounding and influential names)—but likewise that there be instituted and *sustained* a regular system of sound religious, moral, and intellectual training. Education of itself will not supply that which we desiderate. It may be of much importance, or rather to some extent necessary, as the handmaid of training, but it never will supply the place of it. No truth, however precious it may be in itself, will ever benefit any one unless reduced to practice. And this must be observed with respect to the young. Why instil certain principles into the infant mind, and not follow up the inculcation by a habitual training to the application of them? There are, possibly, some misconceptions abroad in connection with this matter. Some seem to be of opinion that teaching and training are synonymous terms, while, in point of fact, they are no such thing; for “while the voice of instruction waiteth for the ear of reason, yet with his mother’s milk the young child drinketh education,”* or training. Indeed there may be, nay, we regret to say that there is, much liberal education or instruction where there is not the veriest vestige of training, in the proper sense of the term; while, on the other hand, there may be comparatively little instruction but such an amount of sound moral and religious, as well as intellectual training, as shall render the parties much better members of society than those who have enjoyed the advantage of a superior education without proper training, or where this duty has been but perfunctorily discharged. It will serve very little (humanly speaking) to inform a child now and again of the duties required of it, either for its own good, the good of the family of which it is a member, or of society, and, above all, those duties required of it by God for the advancement of His declarative glory in the earth—we say it will serve little to inform a child of all this if the child be allowed to live on from day to day in the habitual and total disregard of all these instructions.

An important part of the training of youth (even in the narrow sense in which we are now viewing it) consists in promoting a strong feeling of respect, as well as obedience, to parents. We conceive that the neglect of this part of family training entails evils not only upon the young themselves, and on the family of which they may form a part, but likewise on society at large, as well as on the Church. A spirit of insubordination generated, and then fostered in the family by the mistaken kindness of parents, will tell with very pernicious effects on the character of the subjects of it in after years. It will manifest itself in all the relations in which the person is called to act through life. In all likelihood it will first recoil on the head of those to whose negligence or over-indulgence it is to some degree attributable. It will not rest here, however. The same spirit will, in its development, extend to masters, and then to all in authority, in whatever sphere, whether civil or ecclesiastical. It would be difficult, we believe, to estimate the amount of evil entailed upon the Church and

* Tupper’s *Proverbial Philosophy*.

the world in consequence of the neglect of this part of domestic training. And this desirable object will be as much defeated or accomplished by administration as by legislation. The surest way of preventing children from *behaving* unworthily toward their parents is, for these parents to conduct themselves so that their children shall have no reason for *thinking* unworthily of them.

Another important part of the training of youth, viewed in this aspect, consists in the most scrupulous honesty and the profoundest regard for the truth, and, like the former, requires to be early attended to. Those who know anything of the young are aware how soon a disposition to equivocate begins to manifest itself, whether with a view to conceal faults committed, or for the attainment of some object, supposed or really beyond their reach, except by the aid of falsehood or deceit. When we speak of truth and honesty, however, we do not mean these simply as opposed to the worse than contemptible practice of lying and its twin-sister vice, dishonest appropriation, in any or all of its phases or degrees. Bad though these be, there is a sense in which society is more indebted to truth and honesty than as simply opposed to these. What we desiderate is, that noble, high-toned sincerity and ingenuousness, in opposition to that base, dastardly cunning and dissimulation, which passes current so much now-a-days for prudence and sagacity. Verily, such a doctrine belongs to a system of ethics that has vastly more of the wisdom of the old serpent than the harmlessness of the dove in it. And the evil and danger of it just lies to a great extent in its subtlety. A person in the daily habit of uttering impudent untruths, or of appropriating to his own use that which does not belong rightfully to him, will soon be forced to give up such practices either by one means or another. Not so with the other: it is that which neither the eye nor law of man can reach. It is the sole prerogative of God to search out and punish crimes of this nature. But no one can be considered a good or a safe member of society who adopts and systematically acts on such a principle. Let such principles as these be carried consistently out, and the foundations of society would be upheaved, and all intercourse of man with man would be suspended. Parents have very much in their power with respect to this matter. It will be necessary, certainly, to inculcate these duties upon their children; but it will afford a sad commentary on these lessons and instructions for the young in the family to see from day to day a systematic course of deceit practised by these parents in the ordinary affairs of life. Depend upon it, the children will soon pick up the trick, and practise it in turn, not only upon their associates, but upon the parents themselves, whenever a favourable opportunity presents itself. Never will any person be a good member of society who is not thoroughly straightforward and honest.

Another very necessary part of the training of the youth, with respect to the affairs of this sublunary state of being, consists in the forming and fostering of habits of industry and frugality, not simply as regards those comforts and necessities of life—the gifts of the God of providence—but likewise with respect to all the talents with which He entrusts his creatures as stewards. As far as money is

concerned, those who have most of it should bear in mind that it brings along with it its proportion of responsibility, and that no one can call it his own. God may give them as much of it as they require—the remainder is His. Those who have less of it are required to be careful, lest they come to want, in addition to the sin of abusing God's gifts. But there is something more valuable than money or any other earthly commodity, and the loss of it the most irredeemable—namely, time. This is a commodity of which none can boast of having more than enough; and there is no earthly blessing more abused and sinfully wasted. By all means let the young be trained to estimate time at something like its real value. What a fearful amount of machinery the devil has in operation to destroy time—much of it intended and fitted to decoy the young. We do not confine this remark to those grosser inducements and temptations which are a disgrace to any society—much more so to one bearing the name of Christian,—but likewise to those essentially innocent amusements and recreations which are so frequently rendered relatively sinful by over-indulgence. How often does Satan by this means, in the first instance, entail a lasting injury upon the young themselves, both as regards time and eternity, and then more remotely upon the Church and the world. It will render them in a great measure unfit, and, what is still worse, it will render them indisposed, either for serving God or man in their day and generation. On the contrary, then, let the young be trained to feel that time is inestimably precious—that it is uncertain, and short at the longest—that they have much to do while it lasts; so much, that they have not one moment to loose, the interests of time and eternity having each immense demands to make upon it, and that, therefore, they must husband it well, both for their own interests and those of their fellow-men; we say, let this duty be duly attended to, and much, very much, of the misery would be averted that now afflicts humanity. The waste of time is a root which yields a variety and great amount of bitter fruit.

We may only add further, on this part of our subject, that it is necessary for the young to be trained to habits of thought and reflection. And, as forming a part of the discharge of this duty, it would be well for parents, in as far as in them lies, to furnish their young ones, along with other means, with such books as may convey good, useful information to the mind; and likewise select such works as are fitted, under the Divine blessing, to implant and foster sound moral and religious principles in the heart. Let no one expect to attain anything like comfort or happiness, even as regards the things of time, upon any other foundation than that of religion. It is absolutely indispensable. It seems to us that if this matter of books, or serial literature, now so greedily read by the young in the present day, be not attended to in good time, nothing will please the depraved, vitiated taste, aye, and dwarfed intellects, of the rising generation, and those to follow, but the veriest trash. With all solemnity and earnestness, we would say, parents, beware! let not the young of your family and care feed, nay, poison, their minds with these vile husks

which now issue from the press in such a continuous stream. Immorality and irreligion, in all hues and degrees, are there dressed up in gaudy, fascinating colours, to suit the taste which they have conspired and are still conspiring to debauch; and those seeds of sorrow and ruin are thus being implanted, which by-and-bye, and that at no very distant day, shall spring up, and, under its deadly upas shade, shall spread the palor of death on all that we value here, either civil or religious. Vitiate and corrupt the mind of youth, and what becomes of future generations? What becomes of the Church of God? We leave the reader to anticipate the answer. On the contrary, let all books, or other means of acquiring information and intelligence, be brought to the inflexible standard of God's Word. Apply to them that touch-stone: that which stands the test accept, and that which shows itself base reject—"touch not the unclean thing;" and, upon the whole, institute such a solid, careful reflection as is consistent with the years and capacity of the youth, thus at once strengthening the mind, informing the judgment, and moulding the character. Even taking the lowest view of the subject, it is impossible for any to attain to eminence in the world without the diligent exercise of the intellectual powers, strengthened by thought and reflection. Whatever be the sphere of society in which they may be called to move, mind will always rise superior to circumstance, property qualifications will never supply the place of intellectual qualification; and, by the careful training of the mental powers of their children, parents will confer a lasting benefit, not only upon them, but likewise on future generations, the Church, and the world.

This subject will be prosecuted in our next number.

ENCOURAGEMENTS TO PRAYER FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Luke xi. 13—"If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

THERE is scarcely anything more wonderful than the greatness and glory of the objects which we are warranted and encouraged to ask of God in prayer. When we think of His infinite greatness and our own littleness—of His unspotted holiness and our sinfulness—of the breadth of His claims on us, and how unspeakably we have failed to meet them,—it may well fill us with wonder that we should not only have free access to God at all times to pour out our hearts before Him, but that we should be encouraged to ask the greatest blessings from Him to ourselves and to others, by the assurance that He is ready to bestow *infinite* good on us—more ready to do this than the nearest earthly relations are to give the limited good which they have at their disposal to the objects of their tenderest affection. This is the amazing assurance with which we are furnished in the text. In the preceding context it is taken for granted that men would admit that parents in general, when society is in a morally healthful

condition, are ready to give the good things to their children, which they have it in their power to bestow, in answer to their petition. Notwithstanding the ravages which sin has made on the best affections of our nature, and, among other things, on parental love, it will scarcely be denied that some remainder of this amiable disposition still characterises the conduct of fathers to their children. And in this passage the Lord Jesus makes an application of this admission, which is full of consolation to the people of God and to all who enjoy a dispensation of grace.

"If ye, then, being evil"—who have so much evil cleaving to you—"know how to give good gifts unto your children"—know so far what is good for them, and are ready to give them the best things in your possession—"how much more shall your heavenly Father"—in whom there is no evil, who is infinitely good—"give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

Let us now advert, then, to some things by which we are encouraged, and should be stirred up to prayer for the Holy Spirit.

To encourage and stir up to this, there is—1st, *The character, glory, and worth of the object prayed for.*

Who is this Holy Spirit for whom we are to pray? Is He one of those bright spirits who continue in their primeval glory before the throne of the Eternal? No. He is one of the adorable persons in the Godhead—one in essence with the Father and the Son, and equal with Them in power and glory. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." To Him all the perfections of Deity belong, in their unsearchable glory. To Him creation is ascribed. By Him the heavens were garnished with those myriads of glorious orbs by which they are adorned. He gave men their being. "The Spirit of God hath made me," says Job, "and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life;" and the continued dependence of all on Him is intimated in these words—"If He gather unto himself His Spirit and His breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust."

But for what do we pray when we ask the Father for the Holy Spirit? We do not ask that the Spirit should be any nearer us, or any more really present with us, in His essential character, than He is. For thus none can possibly go from His presence. But we ask the enjoyment of the gracious presence of the Spirit. We ask experience of the power of the Spirit in His economical character, as the Spirit of Christ, and the effectual applier of salvation. We pray for the Spirit's omnipotent and gracious, though invisible, influences, to be put forth on ourselves and others in various ways. We ask Him to begin and carry on His saving work in the souls of men, in the Church, and in the world—creating sinners anew in Christ Jesus—causing saints to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and rendering them fruitful in every good work. We ask Him, when the enemy cometh in as a flood, in various forms of error and wickedness, to lift up a standard against him—raising up and qualifying instruments for maintaining a standard against such

evils with firmness, and crowning their faithful, though feeble, efforts with success—rendering the weapons of their warfare mighty “to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ.” We pray for the Spirit in His omnipotent influence, not only to destroy evil, but also to replenish ourselves and others with good,—with His own precious fruits—“love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.” We pray for the Spirit to cleanse the Church from error and corruption of every kind—to render her the pillar and ground of the truth—to cause her to answer to her name, “the city of righteousness, the faithful city,”—and to extend her in purity and glory till she fill the whole earth, and all nations be blessed in her Divine King, and yield Him a loyal homage. We ask the enjoyment of the Spirit as a blissful comforter, to be with us and with others in the night of affliction, to sustain under trials, to enable to glorify God in the fires, and fit us and them for the issues, so that to live will be Christ, and to die gain.

Such is the infinite glory of the object for whom we are to pray—such the ends to be accomplished by His coming in answer to prayer. Should we not, then, avail ourselves of our privilege in being warranted and encouraged to ask such infinite good, with the assurance that we shall not ask in vain?

2d, *It is to God, in the endearing character of a Father, that we are to pray for the Holy Spirit.*

In engaging aright in prayer, we approach to God as our reconciled God and Father in Christ—we come to Him through the Son as Mediator, and present all our petitions in His name, and, consequently, as persons who have already believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, accepting Him as our Saviour and resting on Him for salvation. It is thus the privilege of all truly praying persons to be the children of God; for we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Adoption into the family of God and faith in Christ are inseparable. “As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even unto them that believe on His name.”

Now, if we feel that we have great encouragement to apply to a very loving earthly father, who has already given strong proof of his liberality, for the good which we need and which he is able to give, how much more should we feel encouraged to apply with confidence for the good which we need, and which He has to give, to our heavenly Father, whose love infinitely surpasses that of the most loving father on earth—whose love never changes, and who has given infinite proof of His readiness to give in not sparing His own Son, but delivering Him up for us all—in not withholding from us His unspeakable gift?

3d, *The mission of the Holy Spirit is a part of the purpose and plan of mercy, in the accomplishment of which the glory of God is greatly advanced.*

The sending forth of the Holy Spirit to apply salvation to the objects of divine electing love is as really a part of the scheme of

mercy as the mission of the Son of God to purchase this; and the work of the former is as essential in its own place as that of the latter.

Have we not, then, the highest encouragement to ask our Father in heaven to fulfil His own purpose, to carry out His own unerring counsel, which shall stand, and to do what is His own highest pleasure—to execute an essential and important part of the work which He has Himself unalterably determined shall be done, and by which the divine glory shall be pre-eminently advanced?

4th, The way for the egress of the Holy Spirit is now actually opened up in the finished work of Christ.

It was only on the ground of this work—or, if we might use the expression here, in the faith of its accomplishment in the fulness of time, and through the Son of God as mediator and surety—that the Father could have sent the Spirit, or that He could have come to accomplish a gracious work in our fallen, guilty world. The glory of the administration of God, as moral governor, behoved to be maintained. The demands of justice behoved to be met. This attribute of the divine nature is inflexible, and admits of no compromise. The truth of God, pledged in the threatening by which the law was sanctioned, “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,” behoved to have its glory vindicated. But now that the Son of God, in our nature, has actually met the demands of law and justice in the room of His people to the uttermost, thus magnifying the law, and making it honourable above what it could have been by the greatest amount of mere creature obedience and suffering, the way is fully, is gloriously opened up for the abundant egress of the Holy Spirit to accomplish His gracious work; and He can, consistently with the infinite holiness of His character, hold intercourse with, and dwell and work in, sinful creatures. He did so under the Old Testament dispensation, on the ground of the engagement of the Son of God as His people’s surety. But it is meet that He should come in most abundant measure, in answer to the intercession of the Son of God, after having finished the work that was given Him to do, and His entrance into the holiest of all with His own blood.

5th, The abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit is specially promised under the New Testament dispensation, and thus the truth and faithfulness of God are pledged for His bestowment.

Under the figure of water, He is promised, not in small, but in the most abundant measure—“I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offering.” He is promised to the Church collectively—“I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplications.” He is promised also to the whole world—“I will pour my Spirit upon all flesh.” He is held forth in Scripture as the great promise of the present dispensation of grace, as that regarding the mission of the Son was the promise of the former. He is spoken of as the special promise of the Father, for which the disciples were to wait, and for the continued accomplishment of which the people of God are still to look and wait; and His mission was the special promise of the ascending Saviour,

which He left for the encouragement of His sorrowing disciples and that of His people to the end of time. His words are—"It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."

There is surely in all this the best possible encouragement to prayer for an abundant effusion of the Spirit. We know that it is the will of God that His people should ask the fulfilment of His promises—He will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do as He hath said—and that He will not, yea, that He cannot suffer His faithfulness to fail.

6th, The mission of the Holy Spirit has been, and is, the object of Christ's intercession.

It will be found, though the Spirit is not expressly mentioned, that His work, in some of its aspects, and consequently His presence and influences, form a leading part of the object of Christ's prayer to the Father, recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John. The preservation of His people from the evil of the world, their sanctification, and their true unity in the truth and in love, are all to be looked for as the fruits of the gracious agency of the Holy Spirit. For the Spirit, again, Jesus promised that He would pray when He ascended up to the right hand of God the Father. "I," says He, "will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth." And as He made the mission of the Spirit the object of His intercession immediately after His entrance with His own blood into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for His people, can we doubt that He continues to do so now in the midst of the throne? In praying for the Spirit, therefore, we have fellowship with an exalted Redeemer in the work in which He is now engaged—who ever liveth to make intercession for us, and from whom the Father withholds nothing that His lips crave.

7th, The Spirit has been given already, and it is promised that He shall be given abundantly in answer to prayer.

God will have prayer honoured as a special means of obtaining all good by men, and by His Church and people in particular. The divinely appointed order is—"Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." And as it is especially to the Lord the Spirit that the revivals and deliverances wrought for the Church under the former as well as under the present economy are to be ascribed, it will be found to have been in connection with and in answer to prayer, that the presence and work of the Spirit was enjoyed in these seasons. The great deliverance from Babylon was preceded and connected with much prayer by the godly captives, of which Daniel is an illustrious instance; and this deliverance is specially ascribed to the agency of the Holy Spirit. The words of God, by His prophets, for the encouragement of His afflicted people then were—"Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Zech. iv. 6); and again—"My Spirit remaineth among you; fear ye not" (Hag. ii. 5); and to the good hand of God upon them, or the influences of the Holy Ghost, they ascribe their success,

and the noble spirit by which they were animated amidst great difficulties.

Again, it was when the apostles and disciples of Jesus abounded in the duty of prayer socially and apart, and while they were all with one accord in one place—no doubt engaged in the duty of prayer, in which we are told all continued with one accord (Acts i. 14, and ii. 1)—that such an abundant effusion of the Spirit was poured down on them on the day of Pentecost; and as the Spirit's gracious influences continued to be richly enjoyed in the primitive Church, this was also accompanied with the spirit of supplications. It was so also at the era of the glorious Reformation from Popery; and this has characterized all the seasons and places in which religion has been in a prosperous condition.

8th, Without the presence and gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, the souls of individuals, and the Church, as a society, must be in a very melancholy condition.

The rain and dew of the literal heaven are not more essential to the prosperity and fruitfulness of the natural earth than the influences of the Spirit are to the welfare of the moral world. This truth is impressively taught by the prophet in these words—"Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers. . . . Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high" (Isa. xxxii. 13-15). The gracious influences of the Spirit are essential to the maintenance and promotion of the work of God in His Church and in the souls of men. Without these the means of grace are powerless either to convince or to edify. "I have planted," says Paul, "Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God"—God the Spirit, the applier of salvation—"that giveth the increase" (1 Cor. iii. 6, 7). Without the Spirit there can be no regeneration, no conversion, and consequently no extension of the Church, but her gradual extinction, as the godly are removed by death. Without Him there can be no saving light, life, or comfort. He is the great conservator of truth in the Church. It is by Him that men are led into all truth, and effectually taught this. When He departs, error, as well as other evils, must be expected to spring up in the visible Church; and it has done so in all past ages. Without the Spirit there can be no true comfort—no saving profit by the means of grace. In proportion as His influences are withdrawn, the plants of grace will languish in the souls of believers, and they themselves will wither as the grass. They will not only fail to yield good fruit, but evil will spring up and prevail in their hearts and lives. Who, then, that has any true concern for the good of the Church, for the conversion of sinners, or the welfare of saints, should not be earnest in prayer for the Holy Spirit?

Lastly, The effects of an abundant effusion of the Spirit are ever most blissful in His Church, and, through her, in the world.

This admits of extensive illustration; but we must be as brief as possible. In what striking language is this expressed in such promises as these—"I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass,

as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel" (Isa. xlv. 3, 4, 5). "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon" (Hos. xiv. 5, 6, 7). How blissful the effects here promised and described in the language of figure! Rapid growth from one degree of attainment to another as Christians—moral beauty and spiritual fragrance—wide extension and great fruitfulness, combined with unity.

It is as the blessed result of an abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit that we are to expect that the predictions of the future glory of the Church in our world shall have their realization. It is by the Spirit that such promises as the following shall be accomplished—"It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it" (Isa. ii. 2). "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited" (Isa. liv. 2, 3). To these let the whole of the sixtieth chapter of the same prophecy be added.

It is also as the wondrous effect of a plenteous rain of the Spirit's influences that we are to expect that the predicted happy change in the condition of the world shall have its fulfilment. It is through His agency rendering the means of grace effectual that "all nations shall call" the Messiah "blessed"—that the cheering announcement shall be heard, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ;" and that such promises as these shall have their glorious accomplishment—"They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. ii. 4). "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. xi. 9); and "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (Isa. xlv. 23). All the inhabitants of the world shall unite in swearing an oath of allegiance to the only true God—in open public joint covenanting with Him.

It is as the blessed fruit of the abundant descent of the Spirit, too, that there will be a realization of such promises in the experience of individuals as are contained in these words of the ninety-second Psalm—"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that he planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing."

Let this subject, 1st, excite to wonder and gratitude. What are we—what are any of the children of men—that the Lord should encourage us to come to Him, and present petitions to Him for the bestowment of such infinite good! How wonderful that He should bind Himself by promise and oath that He will bestow good in such extent and riches! What shall we render to the Lord for this manifestation of His grace and goodness? 2d, Let this subject reprove us and remind us of our faults. Let it reprove us for our unworthy thoughts of the Spirit. Our thoughts of all the persons of the Godhead have been unworthy, but especially of the Holy Spirit. How has He been neglected! How faintly have His presence and influences been respected! How lukewarm have we been in our prayers for the Spirit! How contracted have our expectations been from Him, and how have we failed to give Him the glory due to His name, as the great applier of salvation, the Comforter, and the Sanctifier! 3d, Let it stir us up to one important duty—prayer for the Spirit. What more would we have, or could we have, to excite to this? Could we have a more precious or glorious object to ask?—a more attractive object to ask from?—greater or higher assurance of success?—or more glorious and extensive results of this? No! All these are unspeakable. 4th, Let it teach us one leading cause of our own low spiritual condition, and that of others—our restraint of prayer for the Spirit—our sin in grieving and vexing the Holy Spirit—our sinful, very sinful contentment without the power of the Spirit—our indifference about the enjoyment of His influences—and our ingratitude for His gracious work.

May we be brought to say, with the butler of the King of Egypt, "I remember my faults this day." May our conviction of sin in this matter not be as the morning cloud and the early dew, but be abiding, and have a practical influence, leading us as individuals, as families, as congregations, as a Church, with one heart and one soul, to far more fervent and abounding supplication for copious showers of the Spirit's influence. May we and the whole Church be led to bring this part of the tithes into God's store-house, and to prove Him therein if He will not open the windows of heaven, and pour us out a blessing, till there shall not be room enough to receive. How would this change the state of feeling, and of practice too, in professedly Christian society! With what heart and joy would ministers preach and the people hear the gospel! With what alacrity would all ranks and classes of men go up to the house of God! What blissful and extensive fellowship would be enjoyed with God in secret by young and old! What a rare thing would it be for family religion to be neglected! Meetings for social prayer would no more be left in a languishing condition, nor would any of God's people act as if they esteemed the devoting of an hour or two in a week to this means of edification almost a Popish work of supererogation; such places of assembling together would be filled till they would become too narrow, and require to be enlarged; while young and old would frequent them in the spirit in which Jacob went up to Bethel. God's Sabbaths would cease to be desecrated by idleness or dissi-

pation, or made the great day of promenade: all its hours would be hallowed and esteemed the holy of the Lord and honourable—and spent not in walking in the fields or streets, but in walking with God in the public and private exercises of His worship. Then, too, nations would be cleansed from the other forms of immorality and wickedness which now threaten to involve them in temporal misery and ruin.

DR HOUSTON'S MEMORIAL OF COVENANTING.*

MUCH has been written on religious covenanting, and ably has it been defended and maintained, as a highly important part of Christian duty. The British Covenants, in particular, as national deeds, and often ecclesiastically renewed, have been vindicated and set in the clearest light by some of the most eminent writers and divines that have flourished in this or any other country. The writings, not only of Gib and Moncrieff, but latterly of M'Crie, and Stevenson, and Paxton, and others, are satisfactory evidence of this. A very seasonable and important contribution to the defence of social vowing itself, and especially of our Covenants, National and Solemn League, is the work of Dr Houston now before us, and, therefore, we have very great pleasure in introducing it to the notice of our readers. Dr Houston is a voluminous writer, and has published on a great variety of subjects; but perhaps no part of his writings is, in *present circumstances*, more interesting or valuable than this. It is not only handled in a masterly manner, but has appeared at a peculiarly seasonable juncture. The Reformation, as a covenanted work, is by many now repudiated and trampled under foot, and others are still, with axes and with hammers, breaking it down; but it is encouraging to find one coming forward, so able and so willing, to assist in building it up.

Dr Houston calls his work "A Memorial" of Covenanting, because it contains a particular account of the recent renovation of the British Covenants by the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in Ireland, of which the Doctor is a leading member; and he informs us that it originated in a desire to promote the proposal of renewing the same Covenants by the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. But it comprehends a historical narrative of the most notable instances of social dedication that have taken place in our own highly favoured lands from the commencement of the Reformation to the present time; and, by carefully and faithfully recording these, and at the same time establishing their scriptural character, he has done a great service to the Church. We propose to call attention to the work in a short review, and not only to recommend it to the perusal of the public generally, but for the enlightenment and edification of our own people, and, particularly, with the intention of establishing any who may be in danger, through the latitudinarian opinions that now so extensively

* *A Memorial of Covenanting.* By Thomas Houston, D.D., Pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Knockbrocken. Paisley: Alexander Gardner.

prevail, of becoming shaken as to their covenanting principles. In order the more effectually to accomplish these ends, we shall present a condensed view of the contents of the publication, taking up the different parts of it in their order, though our remarks on the various topics must of necessity be brief.

I. The author commences by a copious introduction on the duty of "perpetuating the remembrance of God's gracious dealings with his Church." This he finds not only warranted and enjoined, but largely exemplified in the sacred oracles. He refers particularly, for authority as well as illustration, to the words of Asaph in the seventy-eighth Psalm, where, with much to the same purpose, the inspired writer declares, "I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." And as notable examples, he points us to "the pillars erected on the plains of Moab, at the end of the wanderings of the Israelites in the Arabian desert"—"the stones set up at Gilgal when the passage of the Jordan had been effected"—"that which was selected by Joshua at Shechem, as a witness of renewed covenant dedication"—"the song of Moses, dictated by the Spirit, to celebrate the passage of the Red Sea," and so forth. All this he describes as "designed to preserve the lively remembrance of special divine interpositions of mercy, and to make future generations acquainted with these displays of the power and grace of God;" and especially, as more immediately connected with his subject, he includes the remembrance of instances of *covenanting* work, and the outpourings of the Holy Spirit that have accompanied them.

Dr Houston's remarks on this topic we regard as not only just and excellent, but as peculiarly seasonable; and we would see from his statements, though his space and his plan have not allowed him directly and specifically to advert to this, the duty and advantage of a judicial and faithful historical testimony in the Church. By whom can such gracious events be better recorded than by the Church herself, acting through her scripturally constituted judicatories? Often is a historical testimony objected to by those who admit and plead for a *doctrinal* one; and particularly they affirm that a historical testimony is necessary only when the facts to which the history alludes are denied. This, however, we regard as an unwarranted as well as an unscriptural opinion. Even the *doctrinal* testimony of the Church has not exclusive reference to the *defence* of truth, or the vindication of it against error, but contains specially an acknowledgment of the truth, as not only bearing the stamp of divine authority, but as an invaluable blessing to the Church herself. But this applies particu-

larly to her historical testimony. It is not intended merely to defend the truth of events that may be denied, but chiefly to perpetuate, for God's glory and the Church's benefit, the displays of the divine character which in these events are given. How glorious the manifestations of God's *goodness*, and grace, and mercy, which on notable occasions, and in peculiar emergencies, have been given in behalf of the Church! And, in like manner, how great the manifestations of power, and wisdom, and faithfulness, and justice, and other perfections, that have been made to appear, by an infinitely great and gracious God, in maintaining and defending the Church, and in delivering her out of the hands of her enemies! Many are the occasions on which the Church has had to bear testimony to such divine interpositions in her behalf. How strikingly do we find this proved in her deliverance from Egypt, and particularly at the Red Sea and in the wilderness, in the rescuing of her from Babylonian captivity and from Paganism in the first and succeeding ages of Christianity, and in her reformation from Popery in this and other lands. Such seasons of interposition in the Church's favour, and for the overthrow of her implacable foes, are years of the right hand of the Most High, and are not only glorifying to God himself, but highly encouraging and sustaining to His Church and people in their present imperfect and militant condition. Looking back on them, the Church can exclaim and sing *now*, and in every succeeding generation, "The Lord hath done great things for us." "The Lord of us hath mindful been, and He will bless us still." She ought therefore to record them for their preservation and transmission, thus taking special care that they may not be forgotten, but writing them, as it were, "with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever."

II. The Doctor, in entering more formally on his subject, takes up, and at great length dilates on, the *nature and warrantableness* of covenanting. Here, in the outset, he states the difference between a vow, a covenant, and an oath. A vow, which may be either by an individual or a society, he describes as the transaction of only one party; a covenant as an engagement between two parties, implying the performance of certain duties by the one, and the fulfilment of promises by the other; and an oath as an appeal to the omniscience of Jehovah for the truth and sincerity of the swearer: adding, that though a covenant may be entered into with the ratification of an oath, it may be regarded as implying both an oath and a vow—all which is certainly most scriptural and correct. A religious covenant he represents as the engagement of a society to perform jointly and unitedly certain religious duties, in dependence on the aid of promised grace, asserting that there is equal warrant in the Word of God for public and social as for private and personal covenanting, and that the public covenanter does nothing openly and before the world but what the private one does in substance in the secrecy of the closet; and, referring to the opposition of some to swearing about religion, pronounces it a monstrous inconsistency to refuse such confirmation to religious engagements, and yet grant it in reference to mere worldly things, following up the whole by showing that religious swearing is not only reasonable but

scriptural, being sanctioned by Divine prediction and Bible injunction and example. All this, stated briefly and generally, he illustrates by an induction of particulars, declaring that "all religious covenants are transactions between God and man, and are founded on the covenant of grace;" that "a covenant with God may embrace various relations of human life and a variety of matter, and yet be throughout regarded as religious and peculiarly solemn;" that "religious covenanting is strictly moral in its nature, and most needful for the welfare of the Church, and is therefore a duty always obligatory;" that "the duty of covenanting is expressly and frequently enjoined by God himself;" and that "religious covenanting has been exemplified by the faithful in all ages, and by the Church of God in the best periods of her history."

These statements the Rev. Doctor not only puts forth definitely, but illustrates fully, and with great discrimination and ability. The duty of covenanting itself he describes as arising out of the first precept of the moral law, which requires us to acknowledge the Almighty as our own God, in both our private and public capacity, and he regards it as enjoined by implication in all the other commandments of the Decalogue. He finds it expressly inculcated in the following injunction of the Psalm, "Vow and pay unto the Lord your God," which he explains as addressed by the Deity, not only to individuals, but to communities; and in like manner demonstrates that it is imperatively required, in many and often quoted passages of the sacred record, as a solemn and important part of religious worship. He therefore most unhesitatingly rejects the modern dogma, that religious covenanting was a Jewish peculiarity, affirming that it belongs to the ordinances which are enjoined by the moral law, and which proclaim the supremacy of God, and man's dependence and moral responsibility. He declares it to be a duty intended for, and suited to, every dispensation of revealed religion, proving that it was practised, with divine approbation, even before the Jewish economy existed, as in God's covenanting with Noah and Abraham, and so forth. He shows, indeed, that dedication to God is *implied* in a public profession of the name of Christ in every religious duty, such as prayer and praise, that we perform, and particularly in our believing on, and closing with Christ, when we first present our bodies a living sacrifice, and give our own selves to the Lord. He asserts even that every act of faith has covenanting in it, quoting Matthew Henry's declaration, that "a life of holiness is a life of renewed acts of self-dedication." To all this we need scarcely say we heartily respond. There can be nothing clearer to the intelligent and impartial reader of the sacred volume than that vowing and dedication to God is a part of service required of the Church in all circumstances. Being a moral duty, it cannot but be applicable at all times, and accordingly God will look to the Church for its observance till the glorious advent arrive, when our blessed Lord shall appear in the clouds to judge the world, and reward every one according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or whether they have been evil.

The concluding remarks on this part of the Doctor's work are pecu-

liarily deserving of attention. They are what he adduces in proof of his statement, that religious covenanting has been exemplified by the faithful in all ages, and by the Church in the best periods of her history. The Church of the living God, he avers, has always been a society in covenant, and that God's faithful servants have ever esteemed it their highest privilege to avouch the Lord to be their God. Noah, after the flood, built an altar, and offered sacrifice, and entered into covenant with Jehovah, who swore to him that there would be no future deluge to destroy, as the recent one had done, man and beast. Not only was Abraham a covenanter, but his covenant was renewed with Isaac and Jacob, and, according to the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Galatians, is the perpetual charter of the visible Church. The Church's covenant is *substantially* the same in all ages—embracing the profession of all revealed truth, obedience to all the precepts of the divine law, faith in the divine promises, the observance of divine ordinances, and the advancement of the divine glory throughout the earth. This was the nature of the covenant at Horeb, and the matter of all the subsequent renewals of it recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures, as on the plains of Moab, and in the days of Joshua, Asa, Hezekiah, Josiah, and Nehemiah.

It was not necessary that the practice of covenanting should be enjoined in the New Testament, because, being moral in its nature, it remained unabrogated and in full force; yet sacred predictions, referring to the new economy, declare the prevalence of solemn vowing and swearing to the Lord as among the privileges of the Gospel Church. Christ himself gives his sanction to vowing and swearing in covenant in His glorious and blessed sermon on the mount, and the apostles tender their engagement of obedience and devoted adherence to Him in terms of a solemn vow—"Lord to whom shall we go," they exclaim; "thou hast the words of eternal life." The Christians at Rome are exhorted to "yield themselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and their members as instruments of righteousness unto God, and again to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which was their reasonable service." The primitive churches practised covenanting, as is clear from Paul's account of the churches of Macedonia, giving their own selves to the Lord as a step of Christian practice beyond what had been expected of them. Not, declares the apostle, as we hoped, which shows that he could not refer either to their profession of the name of Christ or their celebration of solemn sacramental ordinances, for this was what would be looked for from them immediately on their becoming Christians; and the celebrated letter of Pliny to the Emperor Trajan, stating that the Christians bound themselves by solemn oath to abstain from wickedness, and live godly lives; the declaration of Justin Martyr, that adult baptism was given to those only who added a vow to live according to their knowledge and profession; Tertullian's assertion regarding theatrical representations—that the Christians swore against those at the sealing of their creed; and Jerome's express statement, that before the rite of baptism the Christians entered into covenant with the Son of Righteousness, and swore that they would faithfully serve Him,—all

prove that the first Christians were no strangers to the solemn work of vowing and swearing to the Lord.

In fine, the evangelical churches of Christ, both before and after the reformation from Popery, exemplified this solemn part of duty. The Waldensian Churches did so in a very special manner in 1552, and again in 1603, and doubtless their covenanting was an eminent means of preventing them from being totally destroyed by the rapacity of the Roman beast, and of transmitting their testimony to succeeding generations. Not only at and during the Reformation, but posterior to it, covenanting was extensively practised, both as a defence against the persecutors of the Lord's people, as well as for the maintenance and transmission of the cause of truth. How signally was this exemplified in Britain and Ireland, and especially in Scotland, where the glorious Reformation reached nearest to perfection, and in Geneva, rendered so famous by Calvin and other reformers; and in the churches of Hungary and Pennsylvania, and in those of Holland and France, was this solemn work also engaged in, and wonderfully blessed, for the preservation and extension of pure scriptural Christianity. Even the "Pilgrim Fathers," who laid the foundation of an extensive Church and of an empire of freedom in the western world, entered, before they landed on the American shores, into a social and solemn covenant with God, which was several times afterwards renewed, and may be regarded as the germ of liberty in that part of the globe, however much, by the present inhabitants, it may now be neglected and forgotten. All this, suitably illustrated, does Dr Houston bring forward in proof of his statement, that religious covenanting has been exemplified by the faithful in all times, and practised by the Church in the best periods of her history—showing from it satisfactorily, and in vivid and striking terms, not only the reasonableness of public and social vowing to the Lord, but that it has the obvious countenance of Heaven. And for the manner in which he has handled the subject of this leading section of his work, he is entitled to the gratitude of all true-hearted Covenanters.

There is one sentiment which, in the course of his statements on the nature of covenanting, the Doctor propounds, to which we cannot fully subscribe, namely, that we covenant only with Christ, and not with God the Father—a God of grace, generally considered. He, doubtless, regards this doctrine as resulting from the universality of our Lord's "mediatorial dominion." But while we hold the Mediator to be the Church's Head and King, whom every one ought to bow to, and is bound to serve, and with whom every religious vower and swearer is in covenant, we nevertheless consider that, strictly speaking, it is with a three-one God, *in Christ*, that the Church enters into covenant; and the whole tenor of Scripture, and its phraseology, goes to favour this opinion. In what part of the Bible shall we find it said that it is not to Jehovah, as a God of grace, that we devote ourselves, but only to the Mediator? Christ is the Head and reigning King of the Church, and has all things committed into His hand for her benefit; but this does not set aside God the Father, as the Supreme Lawgiver, and, according to economy, the representative of Godhead.

Dr Houston says that it was the Messiah that entered into covenant with Abraham; but do we not find, in the book of Genesis, God the *Father* making the promises of the covenant to Abraham, and the promise of *Christ himself* as the chief of them, declaring, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

III. Dr Houston calls next the attention of his readers to the "doctrine of covenant obligation." This department of his treatise the Doctor discusses in the same luminous and satisfactory manner as he does the parts already considered. He seems even to get stronger as he proceeds with his task, and to display here additional ability. We have seldom, indeed, found the doctrine of covenant obligation more satisfactorily explained and established than it is in the few pages assigned to it in this work. The author commences by stating that the fundamental ground of the obligation of religious covenants is the moral law, declaring that the law of God *alone* can bind the conscience, and that to keep an engagement to do what the law forbids, or to neglect what it expressly enjoins, would render the person doubly guilty, and be the adding of sin to sin; but in the most decided manner affirming that vows agreeable to the law, and to the performance of what the law demands, have an intrinsic obligation of the highest character, so that obligations to duty must bind in all times, and under the gospel as well as under the law. He describes particularly the nature of an obligation that arises from a covenant or vow. This, as most writers on the subject have done, he denominates a superadded obligation, which he affirms does not signify a binding to something not contained in the law, but is an additional binding to what the law comprehends; and he illustrates the statement by the easily understood remark, that before taking an oath, the person deviating from truth is simply guilty of falsehood, but after having sworn, of the more heinous crime of perjury, and hence inferring that covenant breaking is an *aggravated* violation of the law of heaven. He dwells particularly on the obligation of scriptural covenants on *posterity*, or what is commonly denominated their descending obligation. This part of the subject of covenanting he handles to our utmost satisfaction; and the binding force of social vows from generation to generation, by reasoning altogether incontrovertible, he grounds on the permanent identity of society—demonstrating that while corporate bodies exist, and the engagements they have come under are not fulfilled, they are just as much bound by them as individual persons are by their personal or individual vows; and this doctrine, the descending or rather *continued* obligation of covenants, he proves by extensive reference to the Divine Word, and particularly by the judgments of God that have fallen on covenant breakers. He refers to the judgment of famine with which the land of Israel was smitten in the days of David, for breach of covenant with the Gibeonites, four hundred years before; to Jeremiah's charging of the Jews of his day with the violation of the covenant made with their fathers many ages before they were born, and assigning this as the main cause of the desolations that came upon them, in the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and the long continued captivity that succeeded that event; and to many

other instances of divine judgment, some of more ancient and some of more modern date, all proving the continued identity of communities, and that obligations lie upon them from age to age. He alludes, with striking effect, to the present condition of some of the modern nations, such as Spain, and particularly France, which signalized themselves by not only opposing the Reformation, but by persecuting and shedding the blood of God's faithful witnesses. These kingdoms have been long in the most degraded condition, and are the subjects of increasing anarchy and revolution. In this Dr Houston sees the hand of an avenging and holy retribution. From all this, and much more to the same purpose on which he dwells, there is no avoiding of the conclusion to which he comes, that both nations and churches have a moral identity, which renders the vows of one generation obligatory on generations following, till these vows be implemented and fulfilled.

The author concludes his statements on this topic by some suitable remarks on the tendency of the doctrine of continued obligation, describing it as leading the faithful in the present generation to cherish the joyful expectation of covenant blessings to generations to come, exciting and encouraging posterity to confidence in the God of their fathers, involving a solemn warning against backsliding and sin, and furnishing a powerful and prevailing argument in prayer, so that the believing covenanter can say, "I am thine, save me;" "behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people;" "do not abhor us for thy name's sake;" "break not thy covenant with us," and so forth.

Perhaps some, who have studied the subject of covenant obligation, may object to some expressions which Dr Houston employs in explaining the doctrine to his readers, such as that covenants do not bind only the original covenanters, but likewise those whom they *represented*, and that parents *represent* and *engage* for their children, not only in certain ordinances of religion, but also in various social transactions. We do not think it strictly correct to affirm that either nations or churches, in entering into covenant with God, sustain the place of *representatives*. We would think it odd to say that an individual, in vowing to the Almighty, represents himself in the following stages of his life. But corporate bodies, in the engagements they come under, are to be viewed in the same light as individual persons. They covenant not *for* others, or as *representing* others, but *for themselves*, as *societies that exist from age to age*; and as to parents *representing* their children in baptism, we regard this as a *seeming* homologation of the Episcopal notion of *sponsors*. Parents do not in this ordinance engage *for* their children, either in the way of renouncing the devil, and the world, and the flesh, as in the English Church is the practice, or of engaging to perform in their room the various requirements of the divine law. They merely engage to do their duty towards their children, who in baptism are recognized as members of the Church, and taken into, or rather declared to be in God's covenant; and parents engaging for their children in various social relations does not, we apprehend, apply to the present case. But we are persuaded that Dr Houston does not understand representation here in the sense of one party engaging for, or in the room of another, but only in

the sense of a society in one age doing what will be the duty of the same society in ages and generations to come, and so long as it retains its identity. As proof that our opinion as to his meaning is correct, we have great pleasure in quoting his own language in other paragraphs of the same section.

"The principle," says he, "of continued federal obligation is grounded upon an essential characteristic of organized society. This is its *permanent identity*, so that the obligation is not so much descending, as resting upon the same body in different stages of its existence. Society is regarded as morally one during the whole course of its existence, whatever changes may take place in its individual members. It is a *moral agent*, under law to God, the proper subject of reward or punishment. Covenants that are moral in their nature are thus of perpetual obligation. Posterity are properly included in them; and in fulfilling federal engagements, it is not so much one class of persons discharging the obligations come under by another, as society represented by different members performing its *own permanent obligations*;" and again, "we do not make our ancestors a sort of federal heads, as Adam was to the human family, when we allege that posterity are bound by their engagements. The descending obligation of public covenants rests upon the essential character of organized society."

IV. The Doctor having finished his remarks on the subject of covenant obligation, proceeds to the consideration of the British Covenants, and views them in their "history, and contents, and uses." He commences by a well-merited eulogium on Scotland, repeating what is known to all acquainted with her history—that she was styled "Philadelphia among the nations"—and affirming that the Scottish Church and nation had the honour of being, in the fullest sense of the expression, "a covenanted church and land." Of the covenants that were entered into in Scotland he gives a very minute, and interesting, and instructive account, and an account which, though brief, must be gratifying and satisfactory to those not deeply versed in the struggles for truth which our reforming forefathers had to maintain. The first covenant he refers to is one entered into by a number of gentlemen in Mid-Lothian, for the preservation of "Christ's blessed Evangel," in 1546, eight years after the martyrdom of the youthful Patrick Hamilton, which he calls the great *germ* of our civil and religious liberties. He mentions another which was framed and taken by a number of Reformers in Mearns in 1556, and narrates that there were other bonds of a similar character, and having the same glorious object in view, drawn up and subscribed by the friends of the reformed cause, in various other parts of the kingdom—at Edinburgh in 1557, at Perth in 1559, and at Ayr in 1562. But he dwells particularly on the National Covenant, which, at the request of James VI., was drawn up by the celebrated John Craig of Edinburgh, who was at that time not only one of the ministers of the city, but chaplain also to the King. This document was denominated the Lord's Confession, and was the National Covenant in its original form. It was sworn by the King and his household in 1581, and soon after-

wards, with the joint concurrence of the national authorities and the Church, by persons of all ranks throughout the land, invigorating the Reformers and overawing their enemies, and greatly promoting the Lord's work. It was renewed in 1590, on the deliverance from the Spanish Armada, which was intended by the Papists to overthrow liberty, not only in Scotland, but throughout the British isles; and again, ecclesiastically, by the General Assembly, and most of the Presbyteries and congregations of the Church, in 1596. This latter renovation was accompanied with peculiarly striking evidences of the Divine presence, and especially in the Assembly, where, as Dr Houston informs us, four hundred ministers and elders engaged in the work, with hands lifted up to heaven, and tears streaming from their eyes. But the grand renovation of this celebrated federal deed was in 1638, at the dawn of the second Reformation. Then was it renewed in a manner altogether remarkable, and not as in 1590, which was what the King required, wishing to prevent a testimony against his innovations, but in a bond enlarged and suited to circumstances, and particularly containing an abjuration of Prelacy; and the account of the work given by our author in his treatise must be peculiarly interesting to the unprejudiced and godly reader. He relates that, during the first three days of the renovation, the Covenant obtained not less than sixty thousand signatures, and that shortly after it was, with tears of sincere penitence and joy, embraced and sworn by nearly the entire community. He quotes Henderson and Dickson, who say, in reply to some Popishly disposed objectors, "this was the day of the Lord's power, in which multitudes offered themselves willingly, like dew-drops of the morning;" and Livingston, who was present at Lanark and some other places where the work was performed, declares that he had seen more than a thousand at once, with hands lifted up, and tears falling from their eyes, thus giving themselves to the Lord, and that, except at the kirk of Shotts, he had never seen such motions of the Spirit of God. Dr Houston, in concluding his remarks on the memorable and glorious document, describes it in the fullest sense the federal deed of the nation, and declares that it may be regarded as the Magna Charta of Scotland's civil and religious liberties.

In this section of his work, the Rev. Doctor, with like minuteness, describes and defends the Solemn League and Covenant. This Covenant was framed in 1643, and derived its name from its being a league between the kingdoms entering into it, and a holy and solemn covenant with God. It was suggested by commissioners from the Westminster Assembly and the English Parliament to the Scottish Parliament and the General Assembly then sitting, and was drawn up by Mr Alexander Henderson; and the same year it was solemnly sworn and subscribed by both houses of the Parliament of England and the Westminster Assembly itself; and it was generally taken, not only in England and Scotland, but also in the north of Ireland, and by persons of all classes and ranks, who were considered morally qualified for such sacred and solemn work. All this the author states at length, and in forcible and appropriate terms,

describing the Covenant itself as one of the strongest bulwarks of British liberty, and vindicating it from the aspersions that have been cast upon it, as persecuting in its spirit, and so forth. Having given a general account of it, he concludes by a most interesting explanation of its various articles, and an abstract of the objects it has in view; which are the defence of the country against plotting enemies, and the preservation of civil and religious liberty—the extension of reformation and true religion—union and uniformity among the friends of truth—the removal of Prelacy and the evils connected with it—and the promotion of practical godliness throughout the land. His last paragraph is a quotation from Hetherington's *History of the Westminster Assembly*, from which we shall give a line or two, though our space permits us not to do more. "It is difficult," says Dr Hetherington, "to conceive how any calm, unprejudiced, thoughtful, and religious man, can peruse this very solemn document without feeling upon his mind an overawing sense of its sublimity and sacredness. The most important of man's interests for time and eternity are included in its ample scope, and made the subjects of a Solemn League with each other, and a Sacred Covenant with God."

V. The next section of his work Dr Houston devotes to "the continued obligation and renewal of the British Covenants." For the continued obligation of these solemn bonds he has already prepared the reader by his remarks on religious covenants in general; and he now fixes on their being *moral* and *scriptural* as to their *matter*, and in the strictest sense national deeds. If they are national and scriptural, and the kingdoms that have entered into them have a moral identity from age to age, it inevitably follows that they are binding on posterity. In the last part of this section he gives "*testimonies in favour of the continued obligation of the British Covenants*," and brings forward a collection of the very highest human authorities. He appeals specially to the Reformers of the seventeenth century, and particularly to those of them who suffered martyrdom for this truth, and mentions the noble Marquis of Argyle and the Rev. James Guthrie of Stirling, who avowed in the strongest terms, and unhesitatingly, the obligation of the Covenants on the scaffold,—the former declaring, "God hath laid engagements on Scotland. We are tied by covenants to religion and reformation. Those who were then unborn are yet engaged; and it passeth the power of all the magistrates under heaven to absolve them from the oath of God;" and the latter exclaiming, just before he was turned over, "The Covenants—the Covenants will yet be Scotland's reviving!" He finds testimonies to this doctrine among the ministers of the Church of Scotland even after the Revolution Settlement, referring particularly to Willison of Dundee. He brings prominently into view, as testifying for this truth, the "Society People" and the Reformed Presbyterian Church, by whom the obligation of the Covenants was always held as one of their most distinguishing principles. He makes very special reference to the Seceders, quoting the Original Secession Testimony, and alluding to the well-known John Brown of Haddington; Dr M'Crie of Edinburgh, the author of *Knox*; Dr Paxton, late professor in the

Antiburgher Synod; and Dr Stevenson of Ayr,—all of whom have emitted vindications of the continued obligation of our national vows. He finds, in a word, some even in the Free Church who acknowledge the obligation of the Covenants, however much she repudiates and tramples on them, *as a body*.

VI. The author now goes on to consider covenant renovation, and particularly the renewing of our national Covenants by the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Covenant renovation he not only holds to be a duty, but even the duty of a *minority* when the *majority* are neglecting and repudiating the covenants which, as a society, they have entered into and sworn. For scripture warrant for the renewing of federal engagements with God he refers to the renovation of the Sinai Covenant on the plains of Moab, before the Israelites took possession of the land of promise, and to the renewal of the same Covenant under Joshua, after Canaan was subdued and the Church had entered on her inheritance; and as to the renovation of religious covenants by a *minority* when the *majority* are withholding their concurrence, he finds *this* divinely sanctioned by the covenanting in Judah after the defection of the ten tribes, such as that under Asa, and Hezekiah, and Josiah, and even that under Nehemiah after the return from captivity, when the covenanters were but a small minority of the Israelitish nation, with whom the covenant was originally made. He dwells here particularly, however, on the renovation of our Covenants, National and Solemn League, by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, not only mentioning the instances of renewal that took place among the remnant during the persecution, but rehearsing particularly the notable renovations at Crawford-John and Auchinsnaugh. Dr Houston does not refer, and probably from motives of delicacy, to the change of sentiment regarding covenant renovation lately exhibited in the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in Scotland, that has denounced renewing the Covenants ecclesiastically and by a minority as an “impossibility,” “a contradiction in terms,” and “a thing which cannot really have any existence.” But we doubt not that his remarks are intended to convey to the Synod a severe reproof. How they may receive it we cannot pretend to say; but we would fain hope that it may have a salutary effect upon them, and be instrumental in recovering them from the false step into which, by some sinister and ensnaring influence, they have been led.

A very considerable portion of Dr Houston's book is occupied with an account of the renovation of the National Covenants in the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland; and the account which he gives is not only interesting, but must be exceedingly gratifying and encouraging to all who love the covenanted cause, and are longing to see it revived; and his concluding section on the “effects of covenant renovation, and the duties incumbent on covenanters,” are also peculiarly judicious, and highly deserving of consideration. It is pleasing to find him stating the effects of the solemn work that have already manifested themselves in Ireland—in greater steadfastness in maintaining a testimony for the truth—in a higher measure of brotherly love than was before apparent—in increased exertions for the spread

of the truth and the revival of practical godliness, and so forth. But we must forego at present the pleasure of dwelling on these closing parts of the work.

Had time and space allowed, we might have made a few remarks in reference to what the Doctor thinks defective in covenanting, as practised in the Secession. We are not disposed to admit that there is anything in our renovation of the Covenants inconsistent with a recognition of the principles of the Reformation as full and as faithful as that of our Reformed brethren. We do acknowledge the Government in lawful things, but we testify against everything in the civil constitution inconsistent with the Reformation to which the country attained; and we renew the Covenants only in an ecclesiastical capacity, and, therefore, are at full liberty to condemn every evil existing in either Church or State. It is painful to think that the sincere friends of the covenanted cause should be divided; and we are strongly of opinion that, were our differences candidly, and prayerfully, and mutually considered, Dr Houston and we might come to see eye to eye, and be able to renew the Covenants together.

We have great pleasure in recommending the Doctor's work to our readers. Both the friends and the enemies of the Covenants ought to purchase it. It is greatly fitted to disarm of their prejudice the one, and to confirm and establish the other. We could willingly have enriched our pages by large extracts from it had we not already devoted to it so much of our comparatively limited space.

THE INDIAN MUTINY THE EXPONENT OF BRITAIN'S GUILT.

EACH Indian mail is freighted with details of cruelty and violence, in the perusal of which the heart sickens at the sight of human depravity. Official dispatches and private correspondence are alike calculated to produce mourning, lamentation, and woe. That cloud of judgment which has enveloped India is extending its gloomy shadow over thousands of families in Britain. The nation itself is deeply moved; and hard must that heart be which is not melted into sympathy with the bereaved and the destitute, and close must that hand be which is not freely opened in response to the claims of the widow and the orphan. In all that has been done for the consolation and relief of the sufferers we heartily concur. With the national efforts to quell the rebellion every patriot must coincide. None save those who have been schooled into diabolical hatred of Britain by the teachings of Popery can sympathise with the Sepoy atrocities. None but those who could repeat the deeds of violence and blood, did opportunity occur, can possibly rejoice in the Indian massacre. It is only between Popish and Pagan cruelty that there can be found any affinity, and that affinity arises, no doubt, from their common source in human depravity, and their combined opposition to the Church of Christ.

But while we unhesitatingly repudiate the least sympathy with the natives on political grounds, such as has been expressed by the Popish Cardinal in London or the Popish journals in the south of Ireland, we cannot but express our compassion, on Christian grounds, for the dark and benighted millions of India.

In tracing the history of our connection with that vast empire, we have reason to blush, as a nation, at the accumulation of our guilt, unrepented of and uncanceled. Our connection with India has been that of aggression, with a view to aggrandizement. That policy which began in commercial treaty has been transformed into martial conquest. It is true that we have never obtained in detail the record of India's wrongs as we now do the appalling accounts of native perfidy and violence; yet there is reason to fear, that in the sight of the impartial Judge of all the earth, our moral conduct towards India has found its counterpart in the recent insurrection. "Verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth;" and in the execution of His judgments upon nations, their sin can be usually read in their punishment.

Is it not a fact that Britain has confiscated the possessions and property of the innocent, while, it may be, there was guilt, or rather provocation, on the part of some native chief? The page of history, as well as the testimony of residents there, reveal the atrocities of the British soldiery in their triumphal marches of former times. In cases not a few, whole villages and towns were put to the sword, and reduced to ashes, without respect to property or regard of sex. Parents and children perished together in our fatal marches of conquest, though there was no British press to recite the tales of their suffering and woe; but there is a record, and their cry has come up unto the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Neither can we boast of our morality in India. The traces of European blood among the native population bear testimony to the disregard of the seventh commandment in our intercourse with the benighted heathen. We do not mean to say that there have been such glowing outrages at any time as those which have been recently recorded; but it must be kept in view, that guilt is aggravated by the moral position of parties. In the present case, the gospel light of Britain must be set over against the moral darkness of India, and with this contrast must the wrongs on both sides be calmly considered.

In addition to the guilt contracted by wrong and violence in the acquisition of territory, and the guilt of immorality in our intercourse with the native population, there are sins of omission, not less aggravated, that are as clearly written in the recent inflictions of divine judgment.

We have failed in our duty, both with regard to religious enlightenment and social organization. For 250 years British merchants have had commercial relations with India, while scarcely 60 have elapsed since the London Missionary Society established missions there. How limited, even now, are all the labourers from all the British Churches among upwards of 120,000,000. It is thus that, while commerce was yielding from one to two hundred per cent. on capital invested, the moral state of India was completely disregarded. But

this sin of omission lies not against the British Churches alone : it lies, with all its aggravation, against the nation, and its rulers at home and abroad. The policy of Britain towards India has been the policy of expediency, not principle. The religion of the Bible has been held in abeyance, lest heathen idolaters should be offended. In the government schools in India, even Bible history was excluded, while the vedas of Hindoo superstition and idolatry were freely taught. In cases not a few, the missionaries of the cross received neither countenance nor aid from the local government, while in others their efforts have been directly opposed. It is thus that Britons, who boasted of their country, have been ashamed of their religion in the presence of heathen idolatry.

Neither has the social organization of India been conducted on the principles of human rights or moral justice. It seems to have been forgotten that there is not one moral code for Britain and another for India. The black man, as well as the white, is a subject of God's moral government, and must be dealt with upon the principles of rectitude. That he is less enlightened, or that he is less civilized, does not alter the fundamental principles of moral rectitude. His condition may require special appliances, but these must be all regulated by a regard to immutable justice.

Instead of this, class has been set against class—the Mahometan against the Hindoo—high caste against low caste—superstition against ignorance—personal interest against justice, furnishing, at every point, temptation to tyranny on the part of the strong, and perfidy on the part of the weak. Thus, instead of the protection of human rights and human liberty, the spirit of oppression, common to depraved men, was fostered, while iniquity, official and social, was perpetrated in accordance with local law and general custom.

If India was regarded as a part of the British empire, then it follows, that every native, without regard to religion or caste, was essentially a subject of that empire, and consequently had a right to all the privileges springing from that relationship. Has Britain discharged her obligations to the God of nations in administering justice to the benighted millions of India? Alas! to such a question we must answer in the negative. The testimony of witnesses, who were rather partial to than prejudiced against our civil administration in India, demonstrate that these charges are not groundless. It does not render the guilt of our injustice and oppression less, that they might not be so unmitigated in their character as those which had obtained under Pagan or Mahometan supremacy. Covetousness and its native fruit, in those who have more or less power to oppress, seem to have been the leading characteristics of the administrators of the law and the collectors of taxes in that country, native as well as European. This was clearly proved by an appeal to facts by the Hon. A. Kinnaird, in his place in Parliament, before this terrible mutiny broke out; and it is notorious that the greater part of all who resided in India, except the common soldier and the missionary, had one great object—the accumulation of wealth. Nor is it to be forgotten that the steps taken in the reform of the worst kind of abuses, such as direct support to Pagan

abominations, were not the spontaneous acts of the administrators of affairs in that empire, but rather yielded to the loud demands of public opinion. Britain has been verily guilty in regard to the government of India. All but universal corruption has prevailed in the distribution of office, while a deeper corruption has characterized its administration. "We have here in India," says Macleod Wyllie, in a work just published, "a record to look back upon, which should rather shame into silence those who, in England and India, have had the responsibility of the government. It is needless to dwell on the dark early history of notorious and unscrupulous corruption. The House of Commons did its duty then, in exposure; and such an exposure it was as probably could not be exceeded, if there had been a commission of inquiry into the gains of Turkish Pashas. But more orderly times succeeded. Then Lord Wellesly came to India; and such was the tone of public sentiment, that Dr Buchanan had to inform him that, up to that time, there had never been divine service at Barrackpore or at any other station. Then soon followed the days of opposition to Christian missions, and to the resolution passed by the House of Commons in 1783. Carey and his companions were warned to leave the country; Judson and his associates were banished from India. By the pilgrim tax—by the grants to heathen temples—by the superintendence of Hindoo trusts (pronounced to be "endowments for pious and beneficial purposes")—Hindooism was propped up at a time when there is good reason to believe that it was languishing. In seasons of drought the aid of the Brahmins was sought (even not long ago) to pray for rain; there was public worship, at the expense of the Government, to seek a profit on the trade of salt and opium. In the work of education, the Government taught the religious and philosophical errors of Hindooism and Mahometanism. Trade was hampered by the obstinate retention of internal transit duties; the Government insisted on retaining its losing trade with China and its losing trade with India, paying the losses into the hands of shipowning proprietors at home out of the revenues of India. There were obstacles to the settlement of Europeans in India—objections to the suppression of Sati—protests against the freedom of the press. There were many years of great vigilance in exacting the land-tax, and no single measure of enlarged benevolence. Old Indians became types, in works of fiction and on the public stage, of prejudice, selfishness, and folly." Again, "it is lamentable," says Macaulay, "to think how long after our power was firmly established in Bengal we grossly neglected the first and plainest duty of the civil magistrate—suffered the practices of infanticide and the suttee to continue unchecked. We decorated the temples of the false gods. We provided the dancing girls. We gilded and painted the images to which our ignorant subjects bowed down. We repaired and embellished the car, under the wheels of which crazy devotees flung themselves at every festival, to be crushed to death. We sent guards of honour to escort pilgrims to the places of worship. We actually made oblations at the shrines of idols." These are the testimonies of no prejudiced witnesses. They prove, that our national guilt in relation to India is very great. How powerfully

does it suggest the words of the prophet—"Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord; and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" (Jer. v. 9.) The corrupt administration of Israel in the days of Micah has been unblushingly repeated in India. "That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward, and the great man uttereth his mischievous desire; so they wrap it up. The best of them is as a briar: the most upright is sharper than a thorn-hedge." May it not be also added, as in the judgment of Israel, "The day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity."

It is not meant to insinuate that this mal-administration has been universal, nor that those who have become its victims have in general been its abettors; but the fact is undeniable, that the official "red-tapism" of Britain has ever found its culmination in India; and even now, official incapacity stands as really in the way of British valour as it did in the way of personal and family safety at the outbreak of the mutiny. It is to be hoped that the present calamity will prove the death of the corrupting monster, and that there shall be such a renovation of the body politic, that it may find no longer the elements of subsistence.

It is not to be wondered at though every feeling of humanity should be roused by the recent acts of violence and treachery; yet the spirit of many letters from India cannot be admired by any well-regulated Christian mind: indeed, there is reason to fear that our national guilt may be greatly increased by a wholesale massacre of the inhabitants of those cities where the mutineers have concentrated their forces. Almost every military letter from India breathes the spirit of vengeance. Is there not reason to apprehend that, should our arms prove victorious, the retribution will too much resemble the horrors of the mutiny? Is there not reason to fear that British cruelty may go down to posterity in India, just as the atrocities of the Sepoy will be transmitted in Britain? We do not plead for the lives of the guilty rebels, but we would remember that the Moral Governor distinguishes between the innocent and the guilty—we would remember that, in extending mercy to Nineveh, He had in view the "six score thousand persons who could not discern between their right hand and their left," and even the cattle. Nor has God less regard to such now in India, whether Hindoo or Mussulman, than He had to those in the Assyrian capital in the days of Jonah. While we fully admit that it is necessary that the claims of justice be vindicated in the infliction of condign punishment on the really guilty parties in these horrible and revolting tragedies, we nevertheless trust the character of the soldiers of Britain for generosity and magnanimity, as well as courage, will not be tarnished by any deeds, under the influence of a spirit of retaliation, corresponding to those of the mutineers; but that mercy, and even kindness, shall be shown, not only to females and children, but to the private citizens and general population of India.

We have made these observations because of the spirit which pervades certain classes of society at home. We are in no small danger of indulging the spirit of revenge against the entire population

of India; and, what is still worse, we are in danger of subverting that Christian charity taught us by the example of our Lord on his way to the cross, when He said, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." In thinking of the Sepoys as the murderers of our countrymen, and of their atrocious crimes, we are apt to forget that they are possessed of immortal souls, which, perishing in darkness, must endure the wrath of God to all eternity. Is it not a strange perversion of Christian feeling that can weep and mourn, horror-stricken at the thought of a few Europeans suffering bodily torture for a few minutes, or even hours, and yet has not a sigh to heave nor a groan to utter at the thought of thousands—yea, of millions—of immortal souls in India going down to eternal misery, while through our sinful neglect they have never heard of the name of Jesus? Is it not strange that the fountain of liberality should be made to flow freely throughout Britain, France, and America, in order to relieve the temporal destitution of a few hundreds who have suffered loss of goods by the mutiny, while for many years the missionaries of India have been pleading, next to in vain, on behalf of 200,000,000 in immediate danger of everlasting ruin? Is it not evident from this fact, that even professing Christians practically value the safety of the body more than the safety of the soul, and that they are more excited by a short period of bodily suffering in the present world than by the prospect of eternal misery to their fellowmen.

We admire the liberality of modern times in mitigating the sorrows of those rendered destitute by the calamities of war; but until we see that liberality also directed to the necessities of perishing souls, we cannot believe that it springs from a higher motive than human sympathy; whereas the genuine charity of the gospel will not only, like the good Samaritan, pity and relieve the forlorn sufferer, but it will also replenish the treasury of the Lord, by means of which the Bible and the missionary may be transmitted to the lands of heathen darkness.

In most of the British churches there has been a day of humiliation in consequence of the Indian revolt: in most congregations it has been accompanied by a contribution in aid of the relief fund for the Indian sufferers. Ought there not to be many days of humiliation for national guilt in connection with India, and ought there not to be funds raised in every Christian church in Britain for the evangelization of that benighted land?

We hesitate not to spend many millions, as a nation, in reducing to subjection to the British crown a few thousands of mutineers. Is it not high time that British Christians—yea, that the British nation—should spend their millions in bringing the benighted sons of India into subjection to King Jesus? The gospel is in the highest sense the conservator of the peace of nations. When will nations learn the all-important fact, that no superstructure of social life can stand unless founded upon the moral basis of truth and righteousness? Never shall there be peace in earth till "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." It is then that the peace of nations shall be as a river—that they shall beat their

swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks—that nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

It is vain for Britain to expect that her laws shall be regarded by a benighted heathen race, when she herself regards not the laws of the Moral Governor. Long have the rulers of India been crying peace, peace! while the threatened judgments of the righteous Ruler have been suspended over that benighted land. It has been said that God infatuates those whom he means to destroy; and seldom has there been manifested such a spirit of infatuation as that which has displayed itself in many of our colonial rulers.

The crisis has at length come. The phials of Divine wrath have been poured out—as a nation, we have been roused from our lethargy by the stroke of judgment—by profession we have humbled ourselves before God. It remains to be seen whether we shall break off our sins by repentance, or whether the judgments which have begun in India shall be transferred to the heart of the British empire.

The fostering of idolatry in India, and the neglect or discouragement of Christianity, have provoked the wrath of God; while by this course of policy the enemy has been nurtured within our own dominions. The same policy is being pursued at home in the support given to Popery and the neglect of Bible Christianity. If this policy be persevered in, what have we to expect but that we shall reap the same fruit and have to endure a similar retribution. If we disregard the warning given us in the outspoken treachery of the Romish camp, which the Government at home is nursing into strength, as did that of India the high-caste Sepoy, we may be taken by surprise at home as we were abroad, and be awakened to a sense of our full danger by the perpetration of horrid deeds of cruelty on the objects of our dearest affections within the British Isles. Those who now rejoice in the Sepoy atrocities, give proof that they are capable of repeating them in every city of Britain. The Bartholomew massacre in France, the Popish massacre in Ireland, and the Laudean Prelatic persecution in Britain, are equal in horrors to the worst features of the India mutinies.

STRICTURES ON LETTERS AS TO FREE COMMUNION.*

EVERY one who once knew, and who still knows, the author of these letters, must be aware that he has undergone a great change. He has got another heart—he has become another man, so that the wonder is, that he still retains the consciousness of his personal identity. His former strong statements in favour of the profession of Original Seceders yet live in the remembrance of many of God's people—they are recorded in pamphlets—they are registered in heaven. There are, however, several circumstances connected with

* *Letters on Christian Communion*, addressed to Dr Symington and Professor Murray.

his great change worthy of notice. He has turned from a more strict to a more loose profession of religion—he has gone from a poor, reproached, despised, and small denomination, to the influential and popular side, and he is now reaping a plentiful harvest of human applause. He has made this change when he is old, and when great efforts and grace are necessary to sustain first faith, first love and vows, and first works. He has not yet ratified his present profession with all the solemnity that he did the former, by oath and hand lifted up to the Most High, in presence of many witnesses. He has adopted sentiments far more lax than those of the Free Church, in which he is a minister; for it has never till this hour been supposed that the Free Church means the Free Communion Church. He has not hitherto manifested the humility and brokenness of heart which characterize one who has clean escaped from those who live in error, and who now preaches the faith which once he destroyed; and he slanders his former brethren. He represents them as uttering the sentiments of the Church of Rome—as “manifesting a rigidity and contractedness of soul utterly alien to the warmth and expansion of genuine Christian feeling”—as professing an adherence to a testimony of which they are “profoundly ignorant,” and as taught to regard themselves as “far more holy than all other Christians.” Let the candid reader mark the ground of all this theological odium and reviling. They hold that more is necessary in order to church communion, ministerial and Christian, than the mere essentials of Christianity, and that the terms of communion they have adopted are more scriptural than any they can find in any other churches at the present day. If they relinquished the former, they would surrender their reason, their Bible, and their conscience; if they did not believe the latter, they would be hypocrites: and yet, forsooth, because they have not a spurious charity to those who feel no more repugnance to denominational errors and delinquencies than some animals do to skin, hair, and feathers, when bending over a delicious repast, they must be subjected to all this scorn and obloquy by a renegade from their own ranks. When a sponge is thoroughly saturated by some deleterious drug, very much diluted, it may be impossible to detect so much of the noxious ingredient present in every pore as to determine its precise nature; but by compressing the sponge, and subjecting the whole of the expressed liquid to chemical tests and analysis, a residuum of prussic acid, strychnine, or some other poison may be the result. Such are the letters on free communion. Error, in its most attenuated and enticing form, lurks in every page, and pervades almost every sentence; and the inquiring reader, who has his senses exercised to discern good and evil, indicates his uncertainty and apprehensions by unsatisfactory thoughts like the following:—“plausible, but suspicious”—“fair, but fanciful”—“almost right, but something wrong”—“like the Word of God, but, ah! how different.” He cannot fully detect the fallacy which thus eludes him at every trial, till at last, brought out by the pressure of circumstances, it lies before him in a distinct proposition, to which he may easily apply the test of Scripture, and thus ascertain the specific form and virulent properties of the insidious and insinuating principle.

Let us first advert to a little of the error held in solution in this pamphlet, and then examine that which is precipitated from the mass.

The author, in the whole of his letter, reasons from false premises. He takes it for granted, that those who hold and propagate error, and act under its influence, are innocent and passive subjects of excommunication and persecution, when excluded from communion by the terms of ecclesiastical fellowship in a church which contends for the faith once delivered to the saints; but he carefully conceals the fact that they criminally exclude themselves. "Mark them who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." He reasons from the use of the word "Gospel" in a restricted sense, when it ought to be understood in a comprehensive sense, as when he speaks of communion "founded on our common profession of the Gospel," "the peculiar principles of Original Seceders, apart from the Gospel," &c. He once well knew, though now he may not know it, and though some of his readers may not perceive it, that sometimes the Gospel simply means glad tidings of salvation through Christ; but at other times, all the doctrines, laws, and ordinances of Christ, to which His people ought to be subject (2 Cor. xix. 13); and the word of truth, or all that is given by inspiration of God (Eph. i. 13, and Romans ii. 16). He makes brotherly love, apart from some of the strongest reasons and grounds of that love, the cardinal virtue of Christians. Thus he says—"The theory on which strict communion rests is unsound, inasmuch as it leads to the violation of the most explicit of all the Saviour's commandments, which enjoins all His followers first to love each other fervently, and without disguise or reserve, and then to recognize each other as Christians, and to live in communion one with another. This is the law most solemnly promulgated—it is the law reiterated more frequently than any other—it is a law announced as a universal rule of the Christian economy, and is therefore always to be respected rather than any enactment less comprehensive and less easily understood, which may at any time seem to our imperfect apprehension to be opposed to it." Here, and in similar portions of his letter, he carefully conceals from his readers that there is a spurious and a genuine, a partial and an impartial, a feigned and an unfeigned, brotherly love,—that the perfection of Christian love consists in love to the people of Christ, for His sake, or from their regard to His person, authority, and honour, manifested by their adherence to all His truths, laws, and ordinances; and that the most difficult exercise of this love lies in refusing to hold full ecclesiastical fellowship with a brother living in error and sin, to the injuring of his own soul, the misleading of others, and the dishonour of Christ. "Seeing ye have purified your hearts by obeying the truth, through the Spirit, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." "The elder, unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth, and not I only, but as many as have known the truth, for the truth's sake which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever." "And this is love, that we walk after His commandments. This is the commandment, that, as ye heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it." "I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified

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do, he cunningly substitutes the phrase "diversities of opinions." In reply of Mr Wilson, of Perth, to Mr Currie, the ancient enemy of secession, is worthy of the consideration of our readers. "The living brethren are far from stating their secession upon every difference of sentiment. He (Mr C.) tells us that some would and do communicate all that are not exactly of their mind. Who these are our author best knows. But as the above is none of the principles of the seceding ministers (for they know very well that the minds of men may have different sentiments), so the great question before us is concerning such principles or practices as may be justly reckoned a departure from what has been matter of confession and harmony in this particular National Church."

In the absence of any express command of Christ, there is precisely the same sort of evidence—approved Scripture example—for the divine authority of Presbyterian Church Government, Infant Baptism, and the Christian Sabbath. Some erring but sincere Christians, finding no express command of Christ for the two former, regard them only as "the deductions of human reason from general principles," and expunge them from their terms of ecclesiastical fellowship. The author of the letters does so. Suppose that some other erring but sincere Christians, finding no express command of Christ for keeping the Christian Sabbath, and regarding it only as a deduction of human reason from general principles, should resolve to keep the Sabbath, as Christ did for a long time, on the seventh day of the week,—we should like to know if our letter writer would exclude them from church communion; and on what grounds he would do this, and at the same time give the right hand of fellowship to Episcopalians, Independents, and Baptists.

If he had chosen, he could well have told his readers on what scriptural grounds Seceders rest their defence of our National Covenants, and require an adherence to them in order to ministerial and Christian ecclesiastical fellowship among them. He could have told them that "Seceders, encompassed with a great cloud of witnesses," maintain that the Word of God requires nations to vow and swear to the Lord of Hosts—that, in obedience to His Word, our own nation entered into covenants with God, which were in their matter scriptural, as to the time seasonable, and as to the end laudable—that such national engagements are obligatory on posterity—that covenant violation is a heinous sin, and that truce breakers and perjured persons, so long as they remain impenitent, are very unworthy communicants. He could have said all this, and much more, in favour of the regard which Seceders have to the authority of Christ in making the duties of vowing and paying of vows a term of communion; but his object was to excite a prejudice against them, by using the name "the Scottish Covenant," as if neither Christ nor his Word had to do with anything Scottish. The absurdity and fallacy of such a mode of reasoning would be apparent if, in a case of adultery, brought before a church court in our land, one should stand up and gravely ask, in the words of this advocate of free communion, "Where has Christ said, expressly or by implication, that you are not to sit at His table with any of His

disciples but those of them that own a *Scottish* marriage? Search the whole law of Christ, and you will discover nothing to that effect.

He grievously misinterprets and misapplies Scripture—1st, Because we are enjoined, in Romans xiv. 1, to receive one to whose charge nothing else can be laid than that he is weak in faith in reference to things indifferent in themselves, and to receive such an one, for God hath received him. He argues that in every instance the Church is bound to receive him whom God has received. God's revealed and preceptive will is our duty: it is His own high and exclusive prerogative to act as He pleases; and in the exercise of His sovereign right He is inimitable by creatures. He may therefore refuse to receive one whom the Church does right in admitting to His table, and, on the other hand, he may hold communion with one whom the Church does wrong to receive into its fellowship. Hear, once more, Mr Wilson against Currie (Defence, page 70)—“I have given some instances already, and I shall give more ere I have done, that our author's citations do not always support his arguments, especially if they are taken in connection with other parts of the subject out of which they are excerpted. But with respect to his above argument against secession, it leans evidently upon the following proposition—When we separate from a church, we interpretatively condemn Christ; as if He was to be blamed for keeping communion with any of her members. But I do not think that our author will get any of our Presbyterian or Reformed divines that will justify his assertion: they are all very cautious in determining what length a church may go in defection and corruption, before communion is wholly cut off betwixt the head and all the members thereof. Though corruption and superstition can never have the countenance and approbation of Heaven, will it therefore follow, that, when we depart from communion with a particular visible church, on account of her corruptions, our secession is “interpretatively a condemning of Christ, the head of the Church, as if He were to be blamed” if He, in his adorable sovereignty, communicate Himself and His grace even to those who remain in communion with a corrupt and degenerate church? The sovereignty of grace may be glorified amongst those whom it is not safe nor warrantable for us to hold communion with as members of the same ecclesiastical body. The hidden and secret communications of the grace of the Redeemer are neither the standard nor rule of our duty: therefore, though we have declared a secession from the present judicatories, it does not follow that we have unchurched them; neither will it follow that we allege that none of the members of this National Church, who are in conjunction with the present judicatories, have communion with the Lord Jesus.”

“Who,” asks the author of the letters, “are most eminently the objects of Christ's complacential regard? Is a man, because he is a Seceder, though defective in holiness, more an object of Christ's divine complacency than a man who is not a Seceder, but who, notwithstanding, is pre-eminent in holiness?” Seceders are neither so strangely contracted, nor so strangely perverted, that they would adopt such a sentiment. Christian excellence and true holiness are

ever the objects of Christ's complacential regard; but He alone can infallibly judge of the persons in whom they reside. If they exist not in greatest perfection among those whose profession and practice are nearest to his Word, we defy man to tell where they are to be found. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh into the heart; and the things which are highly esteemed among men may sometimes be an abomination in the sight of God. The question is not, what church contains the greatest number of God's people? nor even in what church are the most excellent ones of the earth? but, what church is most faithful to Christ in admitting persons to its fellowship?—the church which tolerates what He accounts error and sin? or the church which is aiming in all things at conformity to His Word? "I know thy works, and thy labours, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them who say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."

He quotes the words of the song, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved," and adduces them to prove a very false position—that Christ invites to His table, not a certain class, but every class of disciples. Now, the very fact that some of His own people may be unworthy communicants, shows that the language quoted above is not applicable to all even of the Lord's people, but to a certain class, consisting of approved disciples, who are, in profession as well as in heart, what He requires them to be. We accept of this writer's distinction between ministers of Christ and Seceder ministers of Christ, and, if he will, between Christians and Seceder Christians. It is not because they do not love His people in other denominations that they are Seceders, but because they love Christ more. It is because they will not be accessory to the sin of restricting the gospel call to a certain class of sinners, as some ministers of Christ do, nor of opening wider the door of admission to the fellowship of His Church than Christ has authorized, as other ministers of Christ do—that Seceder ministers of Christ neither limit the call of the gospel to a certain class of hearers, nor feel warranted to dispense the Lord's Supper to any class, but to those who profess to receive the truths and laws of Christ without reserve. It is because they are Seceder ministers of Christ that, after solemn warning, they leave other ministers of Christ, at their own peril, to take their own way in preaching the gospel to a certain class of sinners, and administering the seals of His Covenant to every class of disciples. "Be ye not partakers of other men's sins." In connection with this he resuscitates a venomous word, of despicable length, to blast the principles and profession of Original Seceders. We will try to present it to our readers—"The historico-ecclesiastical questions of your testimony." Such is the designation he gives to the Secession Testimony, to the goodness of God towards his Church at the first and second Reformations, and at other periods, and to the truths of Christ which are presently opposed and denied. May "He who established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers to make known to their children," not look upon the oppro-

brious epithet and requite it. Would an infidel do a great deal of damage to the Holy Scriptures though he should call the Bible that historico-ecclesiastical book? and is it any serious objection, fatal to the Secession Testimony, that its compilers have attempted to exhibit the form as well as the substance of the oracles of God?

He affirms that the reasoning of Paul, in the fourteenth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, is "applicable to a great number of subjects, and to many of those matters on account of which we have most unwarrantably broken up the communion of saints." Let us examine this statement. The whole reasoning of Paul, in the chapter referred to, relates to things indifferent—which may, without sin, be either used and observed, or let alone,—or to what Dr Chalmers calls "unessential matters," and to the conduct of the more enlightened members of the Church towards the person who is so weak in faith as to attach importance to a thing in itself indifferent; not to him who is so latitudinarian, presumptuous, and daring in his faith, as to be indifferent to anything which Christ has commanded or forbidden in His Word. The sin of the former would consist in his acting contrary to his faith; "for he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The sin of the latter lies in his acting in accordance with his faith; for faith without good works is dead. "There were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." All, then, that is necessary, in order to ascertain whether "a principle that is true" is a principle which Christ requires to be a term of communion in His Church, is simply to ascertain from His Word whether that principle relates to a thing of indifference which Christ would have His Church to tolerate, and make a matter of judicial forbearance, or to a thing forbidden by Him, which He prohibits His people to touch, because it is unclean, or to a thing commanded by Him, which He enjoins them to receive and hold fast. There is no alternative. For the satisfaction of his own mind, and for the benefit of others respecting things indifferent, the Apostle Paul received several private revelations from the Lord, some of them never to assume any higher authority than prudential advice, which might either be taken or refused without sin, as for example—"But I speak this by permission, not by commandment." "Now, concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord; yet I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. I suppose, therefore, that this is good for the present distress." And others of them to be promulgated as law to the Church only when it was able to bear it, and when the things referred to had ceased to be indifferent, such as, that "I know and am persuaded of the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself." So spake Paul, while the using of certain meats and the observance of certain days were things indifferent, in regard to which every one might act as "he was fully persuaded in his own mind." But whenever the time came that all ceremonial observances were declared null and void—that is, abolished—he promul-

gates the law of Christ on this subject with all the sternness of apostolical authority. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and sound doctrine."

Whence arose what the writer of the letters calls "Peter's educational and party prejudices" but from God's appointment of circumcision to be a term of communion in His Church? and how were these so-called educational and party prejudices dispelled but by God's revealing to him the fact that that term of communion was abolished, and that he now made no difference between the circumcised and the uncircumcised. Seceders have heard God saying in His Word, "Thou son of man, show the house to the house of Israel, and let them measure the pattern; show them the form of the house and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the ordinances and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof: and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them." They have been at pains to ascertain for themselves what form of church government the Lord Jesus Christ has appointed in His Word, and who are the subjects of baptism in His kingdom. Their educational and party prejudices, in favour of these and other laws of Christ, have arisen from God's commanding them to keep the whole form of His house, and all the ordinances thereof; and till the Free Communionist can prove to them that Presbyterian Church government is not the form of Christ's house, and infant baptism no ordinance of Christ, it would no doubt be a far more novel and strange spectacle for them to see Independents, and Baptists, and Episcopalians, seated along with them at the Lord's table, than anything which presented itself to the eyes of Peter in the house of Cornelius the centurion. Peter saw that God, whenever He pleases, may revoke and abolish positive institutions, and appoint others in their place. Seceders would perceive, in the case supposed, that God puts no distinction between His own institutions and the inventions of man.

These may suffice as specimens of the perversion of Scripture abounding in the letter to Professor Murray. A few farther strictures must be deferred till a subsequent number.

EXTRACTS.

JOY IN PROSPECT OF DEATH.

"MR HENDERSON (Alexander, the leading man of the Church of Scotland during the Second Reformation period, Moderator of the famous Assembly of Glasgow in

1638, and one of the members of the Westminster Assembly), "shortly before his death, came up one day to the house of Sir James Stewart, Provost of Edinburgh, and dined with him, as he frequently used to do. He was in high spirits during dinner; and after the meal was over, he asked Sir James if he had not observed him more than ordinarily cheerful. He answered, that he was extremely pleased to find him so well as he seemed to be. 'Well,' said Henderson, 'I am near the end of my race. In a few days I am going home, and *I am as glad of it as a school-boy, when sent home from the school to his father's house.*' He then desired that Sir James might wait upon him in his sickness, adding, 'I will be much out of case to speak of anything, but I desire you may be with me as much as you can, and you will see *all will end well.*' Sir James performed his promise, and was much with him. 'His fever,' says Wodrow, 'though lingering, soon seized his head, and he wavered when speaking about temporal things; but when his brethren of the ministry came in to see him, he spoke most sensibly and connectedly upon spiritual subjects. In a short time he fell very low, and Sir James and several were in the room. When just dying, he opened his eyes, and looked up with a pleasant smile. The whole company were amazed, for his eyes shone and sparkled like stars, and he immediately expired. None spoke till he was dead, when they asked one another what they saw, and all agreed that they observed his eyes shining like two stars.'—*M' Crie's Miscellaneous Writings.*

OUR TRIALS OFTEN LIGHT COMPARED WITH THOSE OF OTHERS.

A company of southern ladies were one day assembled in a friend's parlour, when the conversation chanced to turn on the subject of earthly affliction. Each had her story of peculiar trial and bereavement to relate, except one pale, sad-looking woman, whose lustreless eyes and dejected air showed that she was prey to the deepest melancholy. Suddenly arousing herself, she said, in a hollow voice, "Not one of you know what trouble is."

"Will you please, Mrs Gray," said the kind voice of a lady who well knew her story, "tell the ladies what you call trouble."

"I will, if you desire it," she replied, "for I have seen it. My parents possessed a competence, and my girlhood was surrounded by all the comforts of life. I seldom knew an ungratified wish, and was always gay and light-hearted. I married at nineteen one I loved more than all the world beside. Our home was retired, but the sunlight never fell on a lovelier one, or on a happier household. Years rolled on peacefully. Five children sat around our table, and a little curly head still nestled in my bosom. One night about sundown, one of those fierce black storms came on, which are so common in our southern climate. For many hours the rain poured down incessantly. Morning dawned, but still the elements raged. The whole savannah seemed afloat. The little stream near our dwelling became a raging torrent. Before we were aware of it, our house was surrounded by water. I managed, with my babe, to reach a little elevated spot, on which a few wide-spreading trees were standing, whose dense foliage afforded some protection, while my husband and sons strove to save what they could of our property. At last a fearful surge swept away my husband, and he never rose again. Ladies, no one ever loved a husband more; but *that was not trouble.*

"Presently my sons saw their danger, and the struggle for life became the only consideration. They were brave, loving boys as ever blessed a mother's heart; and I watched their efforts to escape with such agony as only mothers can feel. They were so far off I could not speak to them; but I could see them closing nearer and nearer to each other, as their little island grew smaller and smaller.

"The sullen river raged around the huge trees; dead branches, upturned trunks, wrecks of houses, drowning cattle, masses of rubbish, all went floating past us. My boys waved their hands to me, then pointed upward. I knew it was a farewell signal, and you, mothers, can imagine my anguish. I saw them all perish, and yet—that was not trouble.

"I hugged my baby close to my heart, and, when the waters rose to my feet, I climbed into the low branches of a tree, and so kept retiring before it, until an all-powerful hand stayed the waves that they should come no farther. I was saved. All my worldly possessions were swept away; all my earthly hopes blighted—yet that was not trouble.

"My baby was all I had left on earth. I laboured night and day to support him and myself, and sought to train him in the right way; but as he grew older, evil companions won him away from me. He ceased to care for his mother's counsels; he would sneer at her entreaties and agonizing prayers. He left my humble roof, that he might be unrestrained in the pursuit of evil; and at last, when heated by wine one night, he took the life of a fellow-being, and ended his own upon the scaffold. My Heavenly Father had filled my cup of sorrow before; now it ran over. That was trouble, ladies, such as I hope His mercy will spare you from ever experiencing."

There was no dry eye among her listeners, and the warmest sympathy was expressed for the bereaved mother, whose sad history had taught them a useful lesson.—J. E. L. in *Westminster Herald*.

Original Poetry.

AFFECTION'S TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF THE REV. JOHN AITKEN, ABERDEEN.

Blest eventide! The good man's work was done—
 His toils were o'er—he had sat down to rest—
 His mantle loosed—his pastoral staff laid by—
 His house in order set—last counsels given—
 His fold entrusted to another's care—
 His soul committed to a covenant God,—
 It only now remained to wait for death.
 To him, thus 'scaped from life's tempestuous sea,
 Thus merging from the wilderness of toil,
 With nothing but the Jordan now to cross,
 The border land became the Pisgah mount,
 From which the radiant eye of faith could scan
 Those mansions bright on which his heart was set.
 At times there may be seen the gloomy clouds
 Illumined with the lustre of the sun,
 Till, all-transparent, kindling in his beams,
 Their glowing shades reflect the perfect day.
 Thus, through the gathering gloom of death's dark night,
 The faithful under shepherd calmly gazed,
 Until the breaking day announced the approach
 Of that "Chief Shepherd" who the crown bestows,
 And lighted up his pathway to the skies.
 'Tis true that on the closing mortal ear
 Then fell the plaintive sounds of earthly grief;
 But what were these in competition with
 Those higher strains of Heaven's angelic choir
 Which now attracted his enraptured soul?
 'Tis true that o'er his face death's pallor threw
 The mortal shades—those emblems of decay:
 Those lips that spake of grace and love divine—
 That pled with souls—for ever ceased to move;
 Those eyes, that with affection long had beamed,
 Their lustre lost, ere yet for ever closed.
 But now, upon that face a light divine
 Beamed from the eternal throne—a voice was heard,
 That, with an eloquence unknown to earth,
 Invoked the lingering soul to come away.

"Greatly beloved," the voice celestial cried,
 "Thy Master calls thee to His blest abode ;
 The mansion is prepared, thy harp is strung ;
 Bright angels wait—thine escort to the throne,
 Which is encircled by the covenant bow,
 And occupied by him who reigns supreme ;
 Thy glorious crown, which never shall decay—
 The rich reward of grace—He will bestow."
 "So let it be. Adieu ! dear friends on earth—
 Sin, suffering, sorrow, tears, and death, farewell !
 Farewell the Church below ! farewell the world !—
 Gone is the night, eternal day hath dawned ;
 Henceforth my Father's house shall be my home—
 Communion with my God my vital breath !"
 Star of the Church ! bright are thy setting rays ;
 But brighter yet again thou shalt appear,
 When, with God's radiant jewels choicely set,
 Immanuel's crown shall ever be adorned.

J. B.

Selected Poetry.

THE BETTER LAND.

I hear thee speak of the better land—
 Thou call'st its children a happy band ;
 Mother, Oh ! where is that radiant shore ?
 Shall we not seek it and weep no more ?
 Is it where the flower of the orange blows ?
 And the fire-flies dance through the myrtle boughs ?
 Not there, not there, my child.

Is it where the feathery palm-trees rise,
 And the date grows ripe under sunny skies,
 Or 'midst the green islands of glittering seas,
 Where fragrant forests perfume the breeze,
 And strange bright birds on their starry wings
 Bear the rich hues of all glorious things ?
 Not there, not there, my child.

Is it far away in some region old,
 Where the rivers wander o'er sands of gold,
 Where the burning rays of the ruby shine,
 And the diamond lights up the secret mine,
 And the pearl gleams forth from the coral strand—
 Is it there, sweet mother, that better land ?
 Not there, not there, my child.

Eye hath not seen it, my gentle boy,
 Ear hath not heard its deep songs of joy ;
 Dreams cannot picture a world so fair—
 Sorrow and death may not enter there—
 Time doth not breathe on its faultless bloom—
 Far beyond the clouds, and beyond the tomb,—
 It is there, it is there, my child.

MRS HEMANS.

GENERAL RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

TURKEY.

It is cheering to find such a favourable account of the condition and prospects of missionary enterprise as is given in the following report of Rev. J. H. Pettingill, one of the Secretaries of the American Board, just returned from a tour among the mission stations throughout the Turkish empire, in which the labours of American missionaries have been crowned with such remarkable success :—

"He said that his visit to the missions, and his intercourse with the missionaries, were of the most gratifying character, and that his confidence in their wisdom, zeal, and faithfulness, had been greatly strengthened. The Armenian mission, to which the efforts of the Board have been mainly directed in that quarter of the world, seems to be passing through another stage of its wonderful progress. It has drawn very largely upon the treasury of the Board, and increasingly so for the last few years ; but it is the opinion of the missionaries that it has nearly arrived, if not quite, at its highest point of demand upon the treasury. About forty churches have been organized at important points, and these churches are beginning to assume in whole or in part the support of their pastors. Quite a number of natives are in the course of preparation for the ministry, and several have already been inducted into the pastoral office. He said that at the time when the Armenian people were in danger of being exalted with an undue sense of their own importance, as the people to whom the Board had so especially devoted its attentions in that empire, and just when it was desirable to turn their attention away from themselves, and to draw out their benevolent sympathies and aid for others, the Lord had in a most wonderful manner opened the doors that had been so long closed to other races in that empire. The Koords, the Kuzzleboshes, the Turks, and many of the people of European Turkey, especially the Bulgarians, are waking up to inquire after the truth, and they are becoming clamorous for the gospel. The subject of extending their missionary operations into European Turkey was one of the chief topics of consideration at the late meeting of the Mission in Constantinople. The Mission was unanimous in the conviction that it would not do to turn a deaf ear to their invitations, or refuse to enter their fields. It is impossible, he said, to overstate the importance of the case, or to exaggerate the interest which was awakened in the minds of the missionaries in regard to this new enterprise. During his visit there, Dr Hamlin, and the Rev. Mr Jones, Secretary of the Turkish Mission Aid Society, made a tour into Southern Bulgaria, and returned in season to make their report to the Mission. They were everywhere received with kindness, and the greatest interest was manifested by the Bulgarians in their proposal to send them the means of religious instruction. They represented these people as industrious, sober, and peaceable. They have been very much oppressed by the Greek Church and by the civil authorities, and an effort has long been made to crush out their nationality. They have not been allowed to have any schools or literature in their own language, or to enjoy any measure of civil or religious liberty ; but since the power of Russia in that region has been weakened, and since liberal concessions have been made by the Turkish Government, they have become inspired with new hope. They are tired of the formalities and superstitions of the Greek Church ; they have no desire to go over to Rome, nor to embrace Mahometanism. They want to be Protestants, they want the Scriptures and religious teachers ; and shall they be denied ? The missionaries at Constantinople are extremely anxious to have the means of supplying their wants. They ask for six men at once to occupy the Bulgarian field, with the prospect of needing more very soon. Indeed, they so feel the importance of this work, that they would willingly, some of them, leave their own present fields of labour, and go themselves to European Turkey, if no supply can be obtained from our churches. But it is to be hoped that their urgent call will be responded to. The friends of the Board in England are looking to it to furnish the men, and they profess themselves ready to aid it to a very important extent in sustaining them."

RUSSIA.

The following excerpt, from a report given at the Evangelical Alliance in Berlin, is worthy of being recorded :—

"Consistorial-Assessor Bergholtz, of Riga, gave a report of the state of Protestantism in Russia. There were, he said, three million Protestants in that great empire. Many of these kept apart from the Alliance, because they thought its basis too wide. The day was, he thought, gone by for such attempted limitations. The Protestants were everywhere scattered in the empire, and everywhere enjoyed the protection of the Government. There was no large town in which there were not Protestants to be found. Great numbers were in the Baltic provinces; in Finland, with its special ecclesiastical constitution; in St Petersburg and Moscow. The alterations made in the church constitution in Finland, by the Emperor Nicholas, had worked well. A general consistorium at St Petersburg was placed at the head, under the presidency of prudent and excellent men, Von Meyendorf and Ulmann. There were congregations of the Reformed Church in Riga and other large cities. Mr Bergholtz then referred to the internal condition of the Protestant Churches, which he said was satisfactory."

ECCLESIASTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

AYR PRESBYTERY.

At a meeting of this Presbytery, held at Edinburgh on the 21st August, the Rev. E. Ritchie, Colmonell, reported his procedure in moderating in a call in the congregation of Ballylntagh, Ireland, and laid on the table the call, which was addressed to Mr Andrew Anderson, preacher of the gospel. The Presbytery sustained the call as a regular gospel call, and agreed to present it to Mr Anderson. Mr Anderson, being present, accepted the call, and had the usual trials for ordination prescribed to him by the Presbytery. At another meeting of Presbytery, held at Ayr on the 22d September, Mr Anderson gave in his trials for ordination, which were approved; and the Presbytery appointed the ordination to take place at Ballylntagh on Wednesday, the 21st October,—the Rev. James Smellie, Stranraer, to preach the opening sermon; the Rev. John Graham, Kilmarnock, to deliver the defence of Presbytery; and the Rev. John Robertson, Ayr, to preside at the ordination, and afterwards to address the pastor and people. At the same meeting of Presbytery, a petition from the congregation of Toberdony, Ireland, for a moderation, was granted; and Mr Robertson, of Ayr, was appointed to moderate in a call in said congregation, on Monday, the 19th October, being the thanksgiving day after the dispensation of the Lord's Supper; the edict for the moderation to be read by Mr Roger, of Auchinleck, on Sabbath, the 27th of September, at the close of public worship.

LECTURES ON REVELATION.

The Rev. George Roger, A.M., Auchinleck, delivered the first of the advertised series of lectures on Revelation in the Original Secession Church, Wallacetown, on Sabbath evening last, selecting as his subject "The Two Witnesses," which he treated with great ability. Commencing with a short historical sketch of the Roman empire, he afterwards lucidly explained the designation of "The Two Witnesses," their number, their mission, and their condition, reserving the period of their prophesying for subsequent illustration. In answer to the question as to their identity, the reverend gentlemen repudiated the theories current as to their being any two churches, or any two individuals, such as Luther and Calvin, interpreting them as a succession of men who were raised up in all ages to witness for the truth, and "of whom the world is not worthy." The lecture, from its great interest and popular style, was listened to attentively throughout by a crowded audience, the church being filled to overflowing.—*Ayrshire Express*.

THE ORIGINAL SECESSION MAGAZINE.

JANUARY, 1858.

THE MONETARY CRISIS.

TERRIBLE is the crisis through which the commercial world is passing. Fearful are the throes of mental anxiety now visible on the countenances of its ardent votaries. Next to the tumult of the craftsmen at Ephesus is the commotion around the doors of some Banking Establishments. And there are faces not a few which vividly call up the visage of Micah, when he cried to the relentless spoilers—"Ye have taken away my gods which I have made, and what have I more?" A photograph of the Glasgow Exchange, during the height of the panic, would furnish no mean representation of the temple and worshippers of Mammon. Never did the Brahmin open the sacred Vestas with such anxiety as did commercial men their morning papers, during these days of mistrust and gloom. Never did the idolater gaze upon his graven image with such intensity as did group after group upon the telegram pillars. And we must add, that we have never seen a Christian congregation opening their Bibles with half the zest, nor manifesting half that intensity of thought, under the preaching of the gospel, which was exhibited throughout the entire day, as message after message excited fear or awakened hope. So deep was the sense of the contrast, that we could scarcely refrain from questioning the reality of Bible religion, or, rather, the sincerity of its profession, on the part of the Christian community. The query rose to the lips—"Is it possible that God's testimony in the Bible is believed—or that Revelation unfolds the blessing and the curse—life and death—eternal bliss or eternal woe? In this Revelation every soul has an immediate interest—an interest the most momentous; and yet how difficult, for even the most eloquent preacher, to awaken a permanent—yea, a passing—concern regarding our personal preparation for the coming judgment crisis!

In regard to temporal things, commercial men are thrown into the deepest alarm by a monetary panic, which may affect their social position for the present or for life; and yet the same individuals can

hear of eternal death without a passing emotion, or of eternal life without having the currents of thought changed for a single hour! How shall we account for such a difference of feeling, unless on the ground that Mammon occupies the chief place, and that those things which are seen and temporal lie nearer the heart than those things which are unseen and eternal! Such callous indifference could never be, were not the glory of man placed above the glory of God.

The present crisis must be ranged in the category of divine judgments. It is altogether out of the ordinary course of human experience. It bears the impress of offended Deity. It proclaims the wrath of the "Governor among the nations." The present calamity is not local, neither is it confined to any one class of the community. In this dread crisis, the rich and poor meet together. The investments of the rich—the capital of the commercialist—and the labour of the operative, are merged in one common ruin. The individuals of no class can say—"What is this to me?" The anxiety of the Banker is more intense than that of the subjects of destitution in the soup-kitchen. The widow and the orphan, living secure upon the investments of other days, are the sad sharers of this general calamity. It is thus that the panic is transferred from the marts of merchandise to the hearths and homes of every family. It is this especially that marks the footsteps of national judgment. Nor is the calamity confined to Britain alone. The money fever has swept like the simoom over America, and is now spreading throughout the nations of Europe; and let it be observed also, that those nations occupying the highest place in the Christian scale have been the first victims. Is not God saying, as of old—"You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities?"

Viewing the present crisis in the light of a national judgment, it is not our design to speculate on the nature of Bank Charters, nor to attempt the solution of the currency problem. We have no intention of showing what legislative or commercial wisdom might have done to avert the calamity; nor by what expedients the effects of this crisis may be most efficiently met. There is enough of this elsewhere—yea, so much, that the minds of men seldom rise above the instruments, forgetful that the God of Nations is the Author. "Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?"

There are three patent facts, and to these we solicit attention. *There is national judgment. National judgment is the consequence of national sin. Escape from national judgment can only be realized by national repentance.*

In the moral world, as really as in the physical, there is a permanent—an immutable—relation between cause and effect. Sin is the cause of all suffering and sorrow. The sins of social bodies bring suffering as surely as the sins of individuals. And, seeing that "there is a God that judgeth in the earth," nations and social bodies must bear the penalty of their own guilt. Nay, further, as national existence is confined to the present world, these moral principles of action—those laws of rectitude—are fixed, like bills of exchange, to

limited periods. Like the laws of nature—not one of which can be broken without the corresponding penalty—so the moral laws of social life embrace in their violation the threatened curse. The elements of the punishment have a previous existence in the very nature of the sin.

In tracing some of the more prominent causes of the present crisis, commercial immorality holds a distinguished place. By this, we mean the violation of those principles of right and wrong which ought to regulate the business intercourse of man with man, *firm* with *firm*, and nation with nation. In the world which God has made so good, there is enough for all. In the development of trade and commerce, there is labour and remuneration for all—yea, an abundant surplus for those who cannot labour. In the social relations there are channels opened up by which the bounties of Divine Providence may be distributed to all. It is man's perversion—and man's perversion alone—that deranges the moral machinery, and stops the wheels of social progress. It is thus, as in the present case, that a period of prosperity abused, hastens on the gloomy season of adversity. Prosperity tends to excite pride; pride produces the desire for display and luxury; extravagance exhausts legitimate resources; while exhausted resources, with pride unsubdued, tempt to rash speculation on the one hand, or fraudulent transactions on the other. All these, with their accompanying evils, are the characteristics of the present age.

In one department of the commercial world the adulteration of goods is all but universal. It is thus that the choicest productions of nature are corrupted in passing through the channels of commerce. It is thus that health is injured, in consequence of the greed of gain. So extensive and complicated is this evil, that its universality has been pled as an excuse in our Courts of Justice; and after a heartless attempt at legislation on the subject, it was practically abandoned by Parliament, as if beyond control.

Fraud, in weight and measure, stands side by side with adulteration. Is not the God of all the earth now saying, as of old—"Hear this, O ye that swallow up the poor and the needy, even to make the poor of the land fail. Saying, when will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and *sell the refuse of the wheat.*" These things are not uncommon, and are lightly esteemed; but the least of them escapes not the eyes of the moral Governor; hence he adds—"The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, surely *I will never forget their works.* Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one that dwelleth therein? . . . I will darken the earth in a clear day. And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation, and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head, and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day." The bitter day has come! The elements of distrust which have emanated from fraudulent transactions have combined in producing the present

panic. Thus the elements of punishment are matured in the bosom of national iniquity!

In another department of the commercial world there has been reckless speculation; and, as a consequence of this, the introduction of false systems of credit. There is a legitimate speculation which is, and ought ever to be, regulated by the capital invested. The risk incurred ought never to extend beyond the personal estate of the speculator. No man is warranted to hazard the money of his creditors, with even the fairest prospect of enriching himself. The intention may be to pay all his liabilities, but nothing can warrant him to place himself in circumstances in which, by the slightest accident, he may not be able to meet them. The lawful procuring of our own wealth must ever be regulated by a corresponding regard to the wealth and outward estate of others. A large proportion of modern speculation is nothing less than a species of commercial gambling, in which the fall of the market, or the detention of remittances at the given time, may involve the ruin of many innocent parties. This reckless speculation has the elements of distrust within it, and, sooner or later, brings its penalty in commercial disorganisation.

This reckless speculation gives rise to false credit, which modern banking has matured into most mischievous dimensions. We do not speak simply of fabricated paper—representing in reality no business transactions—but also of that general system of discounting bills, by which a man without capital may play the hazardous game of ruining legitimate commerce. Here again are the elements of distrust, tending at any given crisis towards a panic; and here also are the elements of punishment, of which some of our Banks present a very striking illustration. They have nurtured speculators, who in turn have been the instruments of their own destruction. Helping such to victimise the public, they have at length become themselves the victims. Thus commercial guilt brings commercial punishment.

Another patent cause of the monetary crisis is reckless extravagance. Prosperity, even the semblance of prosperity, fosters pride, and pride displays itself in general extravagance—extravagant displays in the modes of conducting business, and expensive styles of living, which, in cases not a few, are designed to keep up the deception. This has been very apparent, both in this country and in America. It was lately stated by a public man in New York that, if the unnecessary finery were all sold, it would do more than cover the entire debt of the city. This continual drain upon the capital of commerce must necessarily produce a final state of bankruptcy. The penalty of extravagance is ultimate penury. The old proverb holds true, that "wilful waste brings woeful want."

It is unnecessary to expatiate on the effects of extravagance in maturing the corruptions of the heart—in widening and deepening the streams of human depravity! These are fearfully manifest in the immorality of our most prosperous cities. These seem of old to have brought the destruction of Sodom. "Behold this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters." Similar causes produce

similar results, and the nation is now reaping the bitter fruits. It has been well observed by the proverbial philosopher that—

Pride is a gloomy bow arching the infernal firmament,
That will lead thee on, if thou wilt hunt it, even to the dwelling of despair.

There is still another cause of divine judgment, which, though generally overlooked, is by no means the least in the bill of indictment—the robbery of God!—the repudiation of the claims of Jehovah! This seems to all beyond the pale of the Church, and, to the majority within her, a light crime; but viewed in the light of Revelation, it appears the heaviest of all. In the cases previously noticed, the frauds practised are between man and man. In this latter case, it is the defrauding of the Universal Proprietor. If sin is represented as of infinite demerit, because committed against an infinitely holy God, it must be apparent that the sin of robbing God is one of the most heinous, as committed against His infinite justice. The command of Christ, to “render unto God the things that are God’s,” is as binding as the injunction to “render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s;” and yet where are the parties who deliberately calculate, on Bible principles, what they owe to God? The charge preferred against backsliding Israel is most emphatically applicable to Britain and America at the present time. “Will a man rob God? *Yet ye have robbed Me.* But ye say, wherein have we robbed Thee? *In tithes and offerings.* Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation.” Who will deny the charge? We have means for everything but the support and extension of the Church of Christ! We can spend millions on war, and millions on luxury, but the offerings of the Lord are contemptible. Many offer to Him what they would blush to offer to a fellow-being in distress, if he was only clothed in decent apparel. Missionaries in India have long been pleading the claims of Christ, in regard to nearly 200,000,000 of perishing heathens. Britain, and British Christians, have been deaf to their call; and now, in a few short months, more wealth and personal sacrifice are required to quell the mutiny than would have laid the basis of a scriptural education for the entire empire! We have obtained our wealth, but it has the element of God’s curse in it, and in one or other way it will bring merited retribution.

They are blind who cannot see that the sin of Israel in the time of Haggai is the sin of Britain and America at the present day, and the punishment then inflicted the penalty now required of both. “Is it a time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.” Could anything be more descriptive of our present position? Vast speculations and bitter disappointments; extensive schemes of ambition and sudden bankruptcy; good wages and wasting immorality; wealth acquired, but even the Banks have become as bags with holes! “Ye looked for

much, and, lo, it came to little ; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it, saith the Lord of hosts." And why ? " Because of mine house that is waste, and ye did run every man to his own house. *Therefore* the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, *and upon all the labour of the hands.*" Is not this a moral portrait of the nation's guilt, and also of her punishment ?

Here, also, we have the germs of the punishment nursed in the corresponding transgression. Withholding from God His due, the mind becomes more and more estranged, and communities, like individuals, become " lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." If men are *unjust* to God in regard to service, or the dedication of offerings, how can they be just to their fellow-men ? If righteous claims on the part of God are disregarded, where is the security that any man will regard the claims of his neighbour ? The violation of the Sabbath, the neglect of ordinances, and the pursuit of carnal pleasure, have mined the foundations of our social morality ; and hence nothing more is requisite than a general panic to cause the destruction of the channels of national sustenance ! Withholding from the cause of God has left wealth for the nurture of pride. The empty treasury of the Lord is a solemn protest against the vain displays of pride and extravagance on the part of professing attendants. The sanctuary presents the symbols of wealth in its worshippers, while the cry of those who have reaped the gospel fields, because of wages kept back, is coming up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth !

It is not to be wondered at that Divine ordinances are lightly esteemed, when men serve God with that which costs them nothing ! Here, also, cause and effect are found in perpetual operation. " Ye said also behold what a weariness is it ; and ye have snuffed at it, saith the Lord of hosts, and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick ; *thus ye brought an offering* ; should I accept this at your hands, saith the Lord ? But cursed be that deceiver who hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing ; for I am the great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen." Many a curse is treasured up in the capital of Christian nations—in the investments of Christian families—and in the accumulating profits of the mercantile world. If God be the God of truth and faithfulness, these must, sooner or later, burst in the thunderbolts of Divine judgment.

Such we esteem the present crisis ! Human foresight could not prevent it, and human sagacity cannot avert its consequences. It is the work of God ; yea, the " strange work " of righteous retribution ! The cause is *moral*, and so must the remedy also be. Space will not permit its full development, but we shall simply at present indicate some of its leading characteristics.

If fraud is the parent of distrust, then all fraudulent maxims and practices must be abandoned. If reckless speculation is the ruin of

commerce, it must be completely checked. If encouragement to bold speculators is unjust to the legitimate trader, then all facilities for the false-credit system must be explicitly discarded by our banking establishments. If pride and extravagance tend directly to ruin domestic comfort and arrest social progress, the former must be humbled, and the latter rigidly restrained. If disregard of the precepts of the first table of the moral law is the cause of such flagrant violations of the precepts of the second, all relations and enterprises and transactions must be conducted with a regard to the glory of God. Finally, *if the robbery of God* is declared in His Word to be the cause of national judgments, these cannot be removed until the claims of Jehovah are fully recognised and honoured.

These are His own terms in dealing with nations; and "woe be to those who coveting an evil covetousness," disregard them! "Bring ye *all* the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

THE TRAINING OF YOUTH.

MOMENTOUS as is the training of youth, when viewed in the comparatively narrow aspect in which it was considered in our last paper, the subject becomes infinitely more important when we contemplate it in relation to the things of God and eternity, which should at all times not only form the foundation of the training of youth, but also constitute the end to be aimed at by it. What a comprehensive question is the first in the Shorter Catechism! And what an important truth always to bear in mind—"Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever." Is not this an ennobling view to take of human life? associating, as it does, man on earth with the bright angelic beings that surround the throne of the Eternal. This is an object worth living for: and if so, why are children not trained more in view of, and in relation to it? The present life is but the vestibule of man's being. During his hasty progress through it, he only undergoes a course of preparation for that period of his existence which reaches beyond death and the grave. And why should the young be trained so much now-a-days as if this world were the best that could be had, or as if there were "naught after death?" We have heard parents expressing much surprise, with an apparent mixture of sorrow, that their children should have become infidel or atheistic, alleging that they never heard anything of the kind in *their* homes. But stay! was the presence of God, His character or laws, ever recognised in the family? What else could be expected of a family habituated to scenes of the most hellish wickedness, where intemperance in the utmost excess was systematically indulged, with heaven-daring profanity, swearing, and a total disregard to the requirements of God's law—the

Lord's day undistinguished from any other day of the week, except that on it there was a greater latitude granted to their unholy appetites, and greater excess in all that is vile, than their worldly avocations could admit of on any of the other six days? What else could be expected, humanly speaking, than that such practical atheism in the parents should bring forth the fruit of open avowed atheism in the children? Trained in a family where "all that whereby God maketh Himself known" is habitually contemned and disregarded, little wonder that the children should go further—a little further only—and deny altogether the existence of a God to whom they are accountable. In opposition to this, let the virgin soil of the young heart be fully sown with the good seed of religion, early instructed in the things of God; and that is the surest way, in dependance upon the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit, of preventing the growth of tares. If the latent seed of corruption, which lies in every human heart by nature, be allowed to develop itself ere the truths of God be implanted, it will very materially affect the growth of holiness, if it do not choke it altogether. But let the good seed have possession of the heart before the tare-seed has come to any strength, and its growth, and consequent evil effects, will be very much retarded. Religion is the only effectual bulwark of the soul. When the soul is thoroughly imbued with Bible truth, it affords a stability and fortitude which nothing in the world can utterly overthrow. Moreover, it sits in the heart that has cordially embraced it as a purifier and refiner, subjecting everything with which it comes into contact to a rigid, searching analysis, rejecting all impurities, and retaining that only which is worthy of a place in the mind of an intelligent, immortal being. It stands like a vigilant watchman on the high towers of the heart, guarding the citadel within, faithful in announcing the approach of an enemy from without, and at the same time apprises when there is the least appearance of disaffection within. Say, then, are they not happy who enjoy the guardianship of this heaven-sent companion in all their wanderings through this treacherous world?

There is yet a higher view to take of this matter than even the spiritual well-being of the young. The value of the soul is greater than we can estimate—approximately we may at Calvary—yet the glory of God is infinitely more precious than even it; and therefore the godly training of the young should have the glory of God for its great aim—the glory of God in the salvation of the soul.

In connection with this branch of the subject, there is an important part of the training of youth very much, if not altogether, neglected in the present day. We refer to the training of the young to a lively interest and intelligent acquaintance with the cause of God in the world; and there is no duty more imperatively inculcated in Scripture upon those entrusted with the care of youth. More especially was this the case when the Lord made any signal interpositions on behalf of, or wrought deliverances for, his ancient people under the Old Testament economy. Then there was always some monument erected, either more or less enduring, to commemorate the event, that the generations to come might be acquainted therewith, and praise the Lord on

account thereof. When God's chosen people were delivered from the cruel thralldom of Egypt, they were strictly enjoined to commemorate the same by an annual feast—the Passover. Nothing could be more explicit than the language of inspiration in stating the object of its institution—to wit, that it might be had in everlasting remembrance (Exodus xii. 25–27)—“And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as He hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.” The same took place at Gilgal, also, by the command of Jehovah, when the thousands of Israel passed dry-shod the overflowing Jordan. “Take you (said God) twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, and command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging-place where ye shall lodge this night.” And Joshua did so; and we are informed that after the children of Israel had passed the Jordan, “those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. And he spake to the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.” The same duty is pointedly referred to in Psalms xlv. 1, and lxxviii. 1–7. Indeed, there is no duty more frequently and imperatively inculcated (in the Old Testament especially), than that of transmitting to posterity the glorious works of God done in the world on behalf of His Church and people. The duty is not peculiar to Old Testament times, however, but, on the contrary, belongs to the Christian as well as the ceremonial dispensation. The Church is one under both dispensations, and the work of the Church is likewise the same—to wit, the advancement of the declarative glory of God in the world. And when God at any time triumphs gloriously in behalf of His Church over His or her enemies, He requires that she not only acknowledge and celebrate the victory at the time—as Moses and Miriam did after the Red Sea deliverance—but that they should perpetuate the remembrance of it, that all coming generations might know of it, and join the anthem of praise to the great Deliverer. The New Testament Church has her deliverances to record as well as the Church under the Mosaic economy. Need we mention our New Testament Passover, purchased at a much greater—an infinitely greater—price, than was that lamb slain on the dread night of Egyptian suffering, lamentation, and woe—even the only-begotten Son of God; and who, ere He suffered, left this injunction with all His people to the end of the world—“Do this in remembrance of me.” And how many notable interpositions has God made on behalf of the Church since that time, assuredly intended to be, and certainly worthy of being, held in everlasting remem-

brance, but now, alas! either altogether forgotten, or remembered merely as a piece of common history. The duty of keeping alive a grateful remembrance of God's merciful dealings towards a people, comes home with great weight upon us as a nation, as well as upon the Church in our land; and especially does the duty lie upon us, as a distinct witnessing society. The duty is binding upon us as a nation, and upon all ranks and classes, notwithstanding of all that may be said to the contrary, and however the truth may be scouted by the "liberals" of the present day. It is difficult to account for the almost total disregard of this duty, except on the principle that man naturally desires not the knowledge of God's ways. In contrast with this, where is the Scottish youth who has not more or less, even from his very infancy, heard of the deeds of martial daring, and the noble heroic patriotism, of Bruce and Wallace. Ere they are capable of reading and judging for themselves, they have already learned to associate their names with all that is good, and great, and loveable. We also can value the disinterested patriotism of our Wallace, and the heroic fortitude and daring of Bruce; but does Scottish history furnish no other examples of noble, high-toned, disinterested, self-sacrificing heroism, and mighty achievements, in a different walk of life?—heroes whose services have done more, infinitely more, for us as a nation—ay, and for the world at large—than it was ever in the power of either Wallace or Bruce, or any other military leader, to accomplish by the use of arms? The merest tyro in Scottish history knows there are many such, who have an obscure, half-concealed niche assigned to them in the temple of fame; and many more, whose names are recorded only in the Lamb's book of life; while a few have a more liberal share of the country's praise, and a more prominent spot assigned to them in the gallery of renown. To be sure it was not the praise of men that they expected, or laboured to attain: consequently their memories may have the less disappointment to sustain—if we may be allowed the expression: However, the withholding from these martyrs and confessors the meed of praise to which we consider them justly entitled, or that their names and services are forgotten, is not so much matter of complaint with us; but we do complain mournfully that the work of God, which they were fitted and honoured to accomplish instrumentally, should be forgotten by us as a nation, and by the Church also, and that in the face of such deeds as the National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant of the three kingdoms—in which last engagement the nation, by its properly constituted representatives, was, by its own act, bound, and is at the present day bound, notwithstanding all that may be alleged to the contrary. Both Church and nation, we say, are still bound by their own act, not only to keep the work of God in remembrance, but likewise to perpetuate the same. By the Solemn League and Covenant, we are bound not "to give ourselves to a detestable indifference or neutrality in the cause which so much concerneth the glory of God, the good of the kingdom, and honour of the King; but shall, all the days of our lives, zealously and constantly continue therein against all opposition, and promote the same, according to our power, against all lets and impediments

whatsoever ; and, what we are not able ourselves to suppress or overcome, we shall reveal and make known, that it may be timely prevented or removed : All which we shall do, as in the sight of God." It is unnecessary to ask how these solemn engagements have been implemented. Alas ! it is matter of painful notoriety that they have been wholly and systematically violated and repudiated. The matter and obligation of these bonds have been alike sinfully disregarded. If, on the contrary, all ranks and classes of society had habitually and constantly cherished a lively concern in the cause of the Reformation—which was manifestly the cause of God and godliness in the land, and that, too, according to their own sworn-to engagement—it would have been improbable, and under the Divine blessing impossible, for matters to have reached their present distracting condition. The evils that are so much and so justly deplored in our day by those who take any interest in the prosperity and advancement of Messiah's kingdom, are just the very results that might have been anticipated by those enjoying any measure of sanctified reason—the result of forgetting and contemning the cause of God in the land. And who can fail to see the peculiar bearing which the training of the young has upon this matter ? It holds a place here, the importance of which will never be anything like duly estimated on this side the grave. We believe that, in a great measure, the indifference and neutrality manifested at the present day about the cause of the Reformation, with all its component and concomitant blessings, is attributable to ignorance and misapprehension, the consequence of the indifference and neutrality of former generations. The zeal of British Protestants has burned with a too fitful flame, generally, to transmit from age to age the remembrance of God's wonderful works done in behalf of our land. The Church of Scotland has been sadly to blame in this respect. No doubt this will form an item in the accounts standing against her, awaiting the great day of reckoning which will come by-and-by.

But this matter comes nearer home : it applies to us as a witnessing body, bearing a public judicial testimony for those principles and attainments, the neglect of which we so much lament. But for this we have no existence as a Church ; and it is for us a very important matter to consider whether we are energetically and faithfully discharging this very important, nay essential, part of our duty. What efforts are we making to train the young in our communion to an acquaintance with our principles, and to enlist their services in the promotion and advancement of that cause for the maintenance of which we are banded together ? Not only is this a duty devolving upon us as a testimony-bearing Church ; but does not our interest likewise imperatively call for the discharge of this duty ? Most assuredly it does ; and that more clamantly than upon almost any other—at least more than upon any of the influential churches in the land. And why ? Because the most that is required by any of the churches just referred to, from their communicants—even by those churches which we might consider to be least objectionable in principle and practice—is simply attendance upon public ordinances, and a life and conversation becoming the gospel. We regret to say that, in some cases, a life not

publicly scandalous seems to be sufficient. So far are they from requiring any definite or "strait-laced" views upon those matters which we consider—and justly—to be of such importance as to warrant us in making them terms of communion, ministerial and Christian, that the utter abnegation of them is reckoned an amiable failing at most, if not a positive virtue, ranking in the same category with liberality, charity, &c.;—and this, taken in connection with various other temptations with which the young are beset to forsake our standard—such as the vast concourses of the rich, influential, and fashionable of the world who crowd the pews of the churches referred to—the charms of music, and that of the most attractive description, bordering very closely often upon the theatrical, not to speak of aught else. These have a powerful effect upon the mind of the young, which is so peculiarly alive to appeals to the senses. And taking even this view of the subject, it becomes absolutely necessary that we strive not only to inform the head, but likewise to engage the heart of the young in our communion to that cause in behalf of which we make a public appearance. Let us not be understood, from the above remarks, as even insinuating a complaint against the numbers of the rich and great of this world who are to be found among the members of the visible Church. Would to God their numbers were tenfold increased! All that we mean to say is, that in this matter we may find an illustration of our Lord's saying, that "to him that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that he hath;" and this being the case, if we intend to maintain our position, it will be necessary to adopt such measures as shall prevent us from being drawn into the vortex. And to do this successfully—in humble reliance on the blessing of God upon our labours—we ought to begin betimes to instruct the young in those principles which keep us separate from the churches around us, in order that they may obtain an unrelaxing hold upon their sympathies as well as upon their understandings.

No doubt parents have a very important and responsible place assigned to them in this matter, and may do much for the promotion of the cause. We have no sympathy with those who boast of their liberality in leaving their children altogether to the freedom of their own will in choosing to which of the different bodies of professing Christians they shall think proper to attach themselves. Does it not accord with reason—not to speak farther of revelation, the voice of which we have already heard—that if parents consider a cause worth their own countenance and support, it is surely worth telling of and commending to their children? And if it shall be found that, after they have discharged their duty in this respect to God and to their children, their efforts have been unavailing, and that their young ones do forsake the standard under which their sires have struggled and died, then the responsibility rests with the children themselves, and to God they have to answer for the same. In addition to this, however, we should remember that parents and children are alike under the cognizance of the Church; and we see no reason why the office-bearers of the Church should not make it their business to ascertain how this part of

parental duty is discharged as well as any other, since so much is dependent upon it. We are disposed to think that both ministers and elders, in their intercourse—even their every-day intercourse—with their people, would find ample opportunity for directing attention to this duty, without encroaching very greatly upon their time. This would have much more effect than a casual remark from the pulpit now and again. It would be a dangerous principle of action implicitly and universally to imitate those who are opposed to us and to the principles which we hold, especially the system (we cannot call it religion) of Antichrist; but we might advantageously imitate its agents in this respect. How sedulously, constantly, and perseveringly, do they adopt measures to transmit from generation to generation their unscriptural, enslaving dogmas. And with them the young are the objects of special care. And the native fruit of this is to be seen in the interest in, and attachment to the Church, which is manifested by them at a very early period of their life. There could be no harm in vieing with them, at least, in this matter. There might be much good. Even in those cases where parents have laboured according to their ability and opportunity, and it may be with success more or less considerable, the labour of the parents may not be sufficient: it may—and generally it will—be found that their efforts require to be fortified or supplemented. The family ought to be the nursery of the Church; and if so, there ought to be a systematic course adopted for having the young transferred from the one to the other. There is a very critical period in the life of the young, that, namely, of the waxing of their own judgment, and the waning of parental authority. At this period the Church might exert a most salutary influence upon the young themselves, and likewise obtain a benefit to herself, or rather a variety of benefits. We can easily conceive how often the young could render much valuable service to the Church, if it were only called into requisition. All their buoyancy of spirit, or even impetuosity of temperament, as well as activity of body, might, under a prudent, skilful leader, be turned to good account in one sphere or another. The young are not interested in the public cause as they ought to be, because they have learned to feel that they have no concern with it. The truth is, that they are treated too much as mere cyphers. Many advantages might be expected to accrue from such a course as we have just indicated, upon which our space forbids us to enlarge. We may only add, that it would be well for the office-bearers in our own communion not only to be acquainted with all the members in their congregations, and their families, but also to know exactly the materials of which they are composed, especially the juvenile portions of them. They would thus be in a position to turn them at once to the most profitable and appropriate use in the support and promotion of the public cause.

And in conclusion, when we look around upon the body, and see the standard-bearers one by one cut down—even those venerable silvery hairs upon which we were accustomed, in our earlier years, to look with such a feeling of veneration and esteem, consigned to the silent tomb, and those from whom we might have expected, according

to the ordinary course of nature, a more protracted life of usefulness to the Church and world, likewise called hence, it addresses a loud call to those who are left on the field to improve the time and opportunity yet afforded them, "That whatsoever our hand findeth to do, we do it with our might, seeing there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither we are going." And likewise, to be diligent in looking about for such as shall be prepared and duly qualified by the Head of the Church for taking the standard from the relaxing grasp of those who, having borne the burden and heat of the day, are at last being called home to their rest on high with their divine Lord and Master.

EDUCATION QUESTION.

The preceding discussion of the general subject of youthful training naturally suggests the great question of the time as to National Education. It is impossible now, in the space left us, to enter at any length on the *questio vexata*, by which many of the ablest heads have been so much non-plussed—"What ought to characterize the much-desiderated Educational Institute of the nation?" A few thoughts, however, may be given as a contribution towards the solution of this very difficult problem.

It is primarily the duty of parents to instruct their children, and Christian parents are under special obligation to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is their duty to see that the whole process of training to which they are subjected be of a salutary kind. Again, Christian parents themselves, together with their children, being members of the Church, she must have a special interest in the religious training of the young; and parents in her fellowship, being under her spiritual jurisdiction, the Church has a right, in the exercise of her authority, to require the parents to give a religious education to their children. It seems therefore fit, on the principles of analogy, that the office-bearers of the Church should also take special authoritative part in the superintendence of the teachers of youth, who so far act as the deputies of parents in the discharge of this important duty, and may be also viewed as occupying the place of auxiliaries to the Church in giving instruction to her youthful members.

But the State, or the civil community, is also deeply interested in the education of the young, as a very important part of society, inasmuch as its future welfare depends very much, as already shown, on the character of the training which this class receives, in whose hands its great interests are soon to be placed. We have, however, seen, that it is only by a sound moral training that any can be fitted for acting a dutiful part, either in public or private station, in a nation—only by this that any can be expected to be good rulers or subjects; nothing but religion—true religion—ever did, or ever can, produce true morality. No mere secular education is adequate to accomplish the object at which the State should aim in seeking the good of the civil community. If it is the duty of the State, from respect even to the best interests of society in this world, to countenance religion and encourage

the Church as God's Institute in its promotion, it is impossible to show that the State is not equally bound to countenance true religion in the school. If this forms the true basis of morality, how can the educational institutions of a country be effectual in promoting the moral welfare of society if this essential element be wanting? Further, as false religion has a deleterious moral influence which is most noxious in its effects on society, and as it is only by true religion—the religion of the Bible—that the real good of society is promoted, it must be the duty of the State, or of the nation in its civil capacity, to see that the true religion be that which is taught in the National Schools. Thus there is scope given for complete harmony of action among the different parties interested in and concurring in the support of the Educational Institutions of a nation.

This view admits of powerful confirmation and illustration, by another line of argument.

All parties are responsible to God for the kind of education which they give to the young. They are by no means left to act as they please in this matter; and being responsible to the Highest for this, they cannot but be so for the character of the instruction to which they give their countenance and support. But responsibility supposes law binding on the parties, according to which their conduct ought to be regulated. All the parties—parents, churches, and nations—are, in their several capacities, the subjects of the moral government of God; and being favoured with a Revelation of His will, they are bound to testify the highest respect to this in all parts of their conduct, and undoubtedly they are under obligation to do so in such an important matter as this.

What has been stated, applies to societies in which educational institutions are only in the course of being set up. This, however, is not our predicament. In our nation, in Scotland, a system of education has long since been established in a very high degree of conformity with the Divine standard, and with the concurrence of all parties.

If parents, being bound by the Divine law, were also brought under a superadded bond by the Church, to give a truly Christian education to their children—the State furnished schools, placed under the superintendence of the Church, to which parents could send their children, in the faith that they would receive the rudiments of a sound, moral, and religious training, by which their own daily instruction would be followed up and enforced. This was undoubtedly one very valuable branch of the Reformation in the kingdom of Scotland.

And though the Church and the State have failed greatly in their duty, and done so in manifold respects, they have not yet removed the original doctrinal test from the constitution of the common schools; and all that can reasonably be complained of by those who approve of their original constitution, is that all the teachers by the law, as it now stands, must be members of the Established Church, and the schools under the superintendence of her ministers, which, in its administration and some parts of its constitution, is not approved by a large number of the Christian community. And the question which has hitherto baffled the wisdom of all parties to answer satis-

factorily is—How shall this defect in the superintendence of the schools, and the qualifications of the teachers, be rectified? Are the parties interested in the education of the young—the Parent, the Church, and the State—at liberty to act in direct opposition to the primary and perpetual obligation under which they are, by the law of God, to give the young a religious education, by an entire exclusion of religion from the schools? None but such as deny the obligation altogether, and we trust such are few, will venture to say that they are! No community, and especially no Christian community, can be at liberty to open up a way of escape from their difficulties by such a direct violation of this primary and immutable obligation. In whatever way the difficulties are to be surmounted, undoubtedly this is not the legitimate path.

What then is to be done? How is this pressing question to be settled? We would say, Let the Church and State retrace their steps of defection from the attainments with which the National Schools were associated at their first erection, which steps of defection have been the leading cause of the divided state of religious society in Scotland. Let this be done, and the greater part of the inhabitants of North Britain will again harmoniously unite in upholding the parochial schools according to their original constitution. This would certainly be the more excellent way.

Another proposal has been made, and most unaccountably rejected, under the influence of a very dubious expediency, to give place to a scheme involving a still wider departure from the constitution given to those schools at the Reformation. It is to this effect:—

“Let the excellent part of the original constitution of these schools which is still left be retained. Let the teachers be still tested by the ancient standards of doctrine, and bound to give instruction in harmony with these standards; and, let the superintendence of the schools and teachers be committed to chosen or appointed representatives of all who approve of that constitution, belonging to the three classes specified, as concerned in the education of the young.”

There would still be the difficulty that a number do not approve of this part of the original constitution. But, in relation to this, it is said, no question of general interest can be settled if we must wait till all are satisfied. This is a kind of bug-bear, which, if made an insurmountable obstacle, would put an end to all national legislation, or action of any kind. A minority, from respect to the dictates of conscience, have to submit to privation; nor must individuals consider that they are subjected to persecution, because the laws and administration in a nation are not in all respects in harmony with their sentiments. No one expects that the affairs of any society to which he belongs can be ordered in all things according to his dictum; how much less can this be expected in regard to national laws and administration. In the present case, it is manifest that, were this proposal carried out, the minority in Scotland would not be great. The Established and the Free—the Reformed Presbyterian and the United Original Secession Churches—are one in approving the part of the original constitution of the parochial schools in

Scotland referred to, and along with them a large number in the other religious denominations. Nor has any proof been adduced that the peculiar principles of any religious denomination, except the Papists, have been assailed in the religious instruction hitherto given in these schools. Light, in respect of superintendence in one of its leading lines, is a desideratum. But, on the whole, this proposal seems to make the nearest approach to a practical solution which has yet been suggested of the difficulties with which this question is beset, in the present condition of the nation, though we are by no means satisfied with it.

STRICTURES ON LETTERS AS TO FREE COMMUNION.*

(Continued from Page 379.)

THE whole spirit of this production inclines towards reasoning in a circle, thus—We ought to have ecclesiastical fellowship in the Lord's Supper with all Christians. But who are Christians? Those who hold our common faith. And what is our common faith? That which is held by all Christians, such as Drs Chalmers and Gordon, Octavius Winslow, John Angell James, and Charles Bridges. But does this look like the law of the house? "Call no man your father upon earth, for one is your Father, even God; and call no man your master upon earth, for one is your master, even Christ."

He once and again reviles the Secession Testimony "as containing a variety of subjects which are exceedingly intricate and difficult," and which ought, therefore, not to be terms of communion. Strange that any believer in the Scriptures should object to terms of communion which contain matters difficult or even impossible to be understood. What shall we say to the existence of God, the Holy Trinity, the person of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, and a hundred other things, clearly revealed to all, but fully understood by none? The design of the Secession Testimony is not to enable persons thoroughly to understand all divine truth, but to exhibit to them what things are firmly believed among us to be the faith once delivered to the saints, and for which we ought earnestly to contend. A person may not fully understand, for example, the Magistrates' power *circa sacra*, and nevertheless believe the doctrine that Magistrates, as such, ought to honour Christ and advance His kingdom in the world. He may not understand more than the great and leading realities of a religious covenant, and yet be fully persuaded from the Word of God that the covenant and oath are lawful, that they are binding, that the violation of them is perjury, and that perjury is a sin which subjects not only to exclusion from Christian communion, but which even tends to bring down the wrath of God on the individual, the church, or the nation that is guilty of it.

* *Letters on Christian Communion*, addressed to Dr Symington and Professor Murray.

He maintains that "the Church can have no authority to make anything a term of communion this year which was not a term last year." Viewing the terms of communion as contained in the Word of God—the perfect and infallible rule of faith and practice—it is true that they can neither be increased nor diminished; but it is not true when we regard them as developed by the leadings of Providence in the profession of the Church. For example, the renunciation of Popish error never could be an express term of communion in the Church before Popery arose, and the performance of any particular lawful vow or oath could not be made an express term of communion till that oath or vow was made. (See Nehemiah, x., and Rev. xiv. 9, 10.)

The only term of church communion to which he seems to adhere drops down, at the close of his letter, like the sediment of an expressed liquid. There it is—"It is the sovereign will of God that Christians hold communion with one another *as Christians*." This means, as he himself explains it, persons who know as much of Christianity as to warrant him to regard them as Christians. This is the false principle which diffuses its baneful influence over the whole of his letter. Let us look at it. "It is His will that Christians should hold communion with one another *as Christians*." This is so far true; but it is only a part of the truth, when he should have spoken the whole truth. Surely it is not the will of Him, who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, that Christians should hold communion with one another merely as Christians, but as consistent, orderly, and approved Christians. If otherwise, what can be the meaning of these texts?—"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." "Now we commend you, brethren (Christians), that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother (Christian) that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received from us." And what was the cause of the Apostle's fear to revisit the Church of Corinth? Not that he would find them to be no Christians at all, but a very different sort of Christians from what he wished them to be. "For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not." The terms of free communion, as enunciated in the letters, amount to this—Admit to the Lord's table all Christians, though they be not in profession and practice what the Word of God declares that Christians ought to be.

The terms of strict communion, held by Seceders, are—Admit to the Lord's table all Christians who are in profession and practice what the Word of God declares that Christians ought to be.

Compare these two: meditate upon them. They sound very much alike; but ah! how different.

Christian brethren, there is but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. Free communion is opposed to the divine constitution of the Church, which is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. It makes no distinction between what is essential to the being and what is essential to the well-being of the Church: it manifests more love to Christians

than to Christ himself: it shows more regard to the fancied rights of the members than to the inalienable prerogatives and supreme authority of the Head: it seeks union at the expense of the unity of the Spirit: it makes free with the Lord's table as if it were our own: it is contrary to the nature of the Lord's Supper, in which all who are partakers of that one bread profess, before God, angels, and men, that they are all one in Christ Jesus—in heart, adherence to His truths, and subjection to His laws: it puts sincerity, in an undefined profession of Christianity, in the room of a credible scriptural profession of the name of Christ, or an open and practical adherence to the one form of church government, one system of doctrine, and one mode of worship enjoined in His Word: it charms men into a profound slumber, and affords an opportunity to the enemy to sow his tares among the wheat: it makes the Church like to some secular and speculative society, the members of which are agreed only on a few articles as the conditions of their association, and are left at liberty to receive or reject everything else which is propounded to them, and to roam at large over the open and wide field of conjecture: it proceeds on the supposition that there is no possibility of the Church, or any part of it, ascertaining what is truth in anything beyond what is merely essential to salvation, and that nothing but what we deem essential to a person's salvation ought to be required of any in order to church communion: it deprives particular churches of all power to preserve their purity of doctrine, worship, and government by any other means than remonstrance and advice, or in any other way to testify for any of the truths of Christ about which all churches are not agreed: it brands the Secession and the Free Church as guilty of the heinous crime of schism in leaving the communion of the Established Church, and maintaining a separate fellowship from it: it usurps Christ's prerogative to judge of the heart, and renders the exercise of His sovereignty, in holding communion with His people, identical with the terms which He has prescribed to us of our communion with Him and with one another; and it sets at nought all apostolic and divine injunctions, such as the following, addressed to churches and individuals—"That ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." "It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." "Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." "That which ye have, hold fast till I come."

You may be twitted with your presumption in daring to judge, not for others, but for yourselves, what profession of religion is most in accordance with the Word of God; but remember, that while all parties are presently upon trial, and are appealing to Him as the Supreme Judge, He will, ere long, give forth His decision in such a manner as to silence all who have not spoken concerning Him the thing which is right. "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them; and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

Assuredly the present is not the time to break down the bulwarks of the Church, by demolishing scriptural terms of communion contained in confessions and testimonies, when the bitter consequences of hostility to them are beginning so fearfully to develop themselves by *Morrisonianism* in Scotland, *Negative Theology* in England, *Pantheism* in Europe and America, and *Infidelity* and *Popery* everywhere. There is a wide difference between simple ignorance or defective knowledge of divine truth, arising from want of information or the means of instruction, and that error which denies and opposes truth when revealed and known. There is a great difference between the disciples of John, who said, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost," and such members or elders as arose in the Church of Ephesus speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them, or even as *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, who erred concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrew the faith of some; and also between the Gentile proselyte of the gate, who sitting in his chariot as he returned from Jerusalem read the prophet *Esaias*, and when asked by Philip, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" answered, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him, and then put the question to him—"I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or of some other man?"—and the men of the synagogue of Nazareth, who, when they heard Jesus read and expound a passage out of the same prophet, "were all filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong." The former is negative, passive, comparatively harmless, a vacuum which may be filled up on application for admission to church communion. The latter is positive, active, injurious, an incubus on the fellowship of the Church, more easily kept at a distance than thrown off.

"Give me a syllogism," exclaims our redoubted champion. We offer him the following, and lay them before our readers:—

Major proposition—The profession of that which is the terms of our fellowship with Christ at His table must be the terms of our ecclesiastical fellowship one with another. The proof is at hand. (1 John i. 3, 7)—"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

Minor proposition—But evangelical obedience to the will of Christ is the terms of our fellowship with Him at His table. The assumption is thus proved. (1 John ii. 6)—"He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

Conclusion—Ergo, The profession of evangelical obedience to the will of Christ must be the terms of our ecclesiastical fellowship one with another.

Making this conclusion the premises, another syllogism arises, thus:—

Major—The terms of communion which Christ has established in His Church are the profession of evangelical obedience to His will, summed up in the moral law, and clearly, fully, and particularly revealed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. If the premises had not been sufficiently proved, the following texts would establish them:—"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me. Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion hath light with darkness? What concord hath Christ with Belial? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? Ye are the temple of God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Minor—But evangelical obedience, being in its nature exceeding broad, and admitting of various degrees of excellence, is the more faithful and acceptable to Christ the nearer it arrives at perfection, or the stricter and the more comprehensive of truth and duty that it is. The following texts prove the assumption (Deut. v. 27, 28, 29):—"Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it. And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me, and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" (Mat. v. 19)—"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Conclusion—Ergo, That church's terms of communion are most in accordance with the Word and the will of Christ, the greater the amount of evangelical obedience which is embodied in its profession, or the more comprehensive of truth and duty that its profession is.

Divested of all incumbrances, the syllogism stands thus:—

Premises—The only divine terms of communion in the Church are—The profession of evangelical obedience to the will of Christ.

Assumption—But evangelical obedience is all the more pleasing to Christ the stricter that it is.

Conclusion—Therefore, the divine terms of communion in the Church are the more acceptable to Christ the more strict the evangelical obedience which its members profess.

Corollary—It follows that Seceders do not unchurch all other denominations that differ from them, and do not say that they have no divine terms of communion, or that Christ holds no communion with them. The utmost that we do say is, that we are pressing after perfection in terms of communion, and have got the vantage ground, not of those who are above and before us, but of those who are below and behind us, in terms of ecclesiastical fellowship.

It may be added that the subject discussed in these letters, and which the author tries to agitate with such pertinacity, is not one in which he comes in collision only with the principles of Original Seceders and Reformed Presbyterians. It takes a very wide range. It is a subject in which the glory of the Church's Head and the best interests of all the Churches are deeply concerned. If the writer be a man of principle and conscience, and not a mere wrangler, he must be precluded, by his recently-adopted doctrines, from taking part in the administration of the Free, as really as in that of the Original Secession, Church. How can he take part with any Presbytery of that Church, in giving certain parties license to preach the Gospel, or in the ordination of a minister, when in doing so they exact such extended and comprehensive terms of communion as are contained in the Formula of the Free Church? Can he take part in an ordination of elders or deacons in his own congregation, when in doing so he must proceed in the teeth of his principles in exacting such broad terms of communion?—and he has yet to show from the Bible, that what is good and laudable in relation to the office-bearers of Christ's house is evil in this matter when extended to private members.

It might be asked also, what kind of Church would that be which could be constituted on the principles for which this writer contends? Would she be such as the Bible requires, either in her constitution or administration? No, verily! Would her ministers teach all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded? Could her members be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment? Would she be characterised by a scriptural unity? No; she would not be a homogeneous body, but a conglomeration of the most heterogeneous materials. Could she fulfil the high ends, the accomplishment of which God has assigned His Church in our world? Would she be the pillar and ground of the truth, in and by which the various lines of this, in opposition to those of pestilential error, would be so exhibited that it might be known and read of all men? or would she be a faithful witness for God in the earth, or a witness at all? In short, would there be true peace and love within her borders? There could not possibly be peace, unless through the triumph of error and corruption in her courts and administration, and unless all the friends of truth within her pale were gagged and manacled, or all zeal for this extinguished—in other words, until Protestants, under the leadership of this reckless Champion of Free Communion, and those who sympathise with him, were led back by this route to the gulph of Popery, in which all forms of error are tolerated, but no voice must be heard in defence of truth. It was in this that the progressing latitudinarianism of the primitive Church had its consummation; and it is not more true in mathematics, that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another, than it is in morals, that like causes must be expected to produce like effects. We would most seriously exhort this writer to consider whither his principles tend: he is not surely so blind as not to see that his present position is not so much as within sight of the landing-place to which they will conduct him if followed out.

EXTRACTS.

IMPRECATING PSALMS.

"THESE Psalms bring no more upon the wicked than the Divine Providence brings upon them. They give forth the burden of the Lord against such men; but no more than that; and must we suppose it impossible that an inspired mind may become so much one with the Divine mind in these respects as justly to pray that the Divine Being would do what it would be assuredly *righteous* in Him to do, and what in His time he assuredly *will* do? In this view, the argument against the Imprecatory Psalms becomes an argument against the moral government of God." —*British Quarterly Review*.

DAILY BLESSINGS.

DAILY blessings, direct from the Lord's own hand, are so numerous, and so constantly and regularly supplied, that we forget that they are daily, hourly gifts from the Lord's mercy. We live—He gives us life. We breathe—and every instant breathe the air that God alone can form. "He formed the earth and made it" for our abode. He forms our food, and "gives us water of the rain of heaven." Without all these, we could not be. Were he to withhold either, we should perish. He gives the days and seasons in their order, and all for us. If the Lord should sometimes forget us as we forget him; if he should forget to make the sun rise as often as we forget to thank him for its light; if he should forget to send the shower, and make the grass to grow, and the harvests to ripen, as often as we forget that they are his gifts to us, the last woe would be accomplished upon a thankless world. We forget to read his word, forget to pray to him, forget to keep his commandments, forget to teach our children by precept and example to worship and obey him, forget at meals to thank him for our daily bread, forget his Sabbaths, are tardy and habitually behind time in assembling at his house for Sabbath worship, forget to love him and to deal justly with our fellow-men, and then are discontented and half-angry if we do not receive at his hand all that our vain wishes crave. Were the Lord to deal by us as we deal by him, and by each other, how little should we have! We receive our "daily bread," only because "his mercy endureth for ever."

The fact that the Lord in his mercy operates by means, obscures our vision to the fact that he operates at all. And yet I doubt—if every morning bread and fruits and choicest dishes dropped down from heaven on our tables—if then we would for any length of time think of them as the Lord's gifts. A few days, and it would be an old story—a common thing—expected as a matter of course. Is our daily bread less the direct gift of the Lord to us, because his mercy gives it as a reward to industry? He formed the bed of the mould, he gave the seed, he gives the sun to warm, and the shower to fructify. He is the great chemist who formed the universe a mighty laboratory, wherein to work the wondrous changes we behold. Is he less God, and less our God, and less the giver of our daily bread, because he forms it for us before our eyes, and allows our aid in doing it? Does he less give the luscious fruit, because he allows the tree to grow and blossom, and bear its rich burthen within our garden, to bless our eyes with its beauty? Is bread the less his gift because he lets it grow in our fields, to adorn the earth and beautify the landscape with its green glades and golden waves? Did you ever think how desolate the world would be if God formed all our food and clothes in heaven, and hung them in our wardrobe, or dropped our food every morning, ready cooked, upon our tables? No green fields, no fruitful trees, no flocks, no herds! A bald and barren desert would meet our deadened sense on every side! How pleased are children, and how grateful to their teacher, when he invites them to his study, his museum, or his laboratory, and exhibits to them his experiments in chemistry; and how proud and pleased the boy who may be permitted to assist in some of the more easy and simple acts. Is he not more grateful for the honoured privilege? And yet how strange that men complain because the God of chemistry works out his wonders before their eyes, and honours them by giving them some easy parts to do.—*New York Messenger*.

A STRIKING PRAYER AND ITS ANSWER.

A MISSIONARY in India, passing one day through the school-room, observed a little boy engaged in prayer, and overheard him saying, "O Lord Jesus, I thank thee for sending big ship into my country, and wicked men to steal me and bring me here, that I might hear about thee; and now, Lord Jesus, I have one great favour to ask thee. Please to send wicked men with another big ship, and let them catch my father and my mother, and bring them to this country, that they may hear the missionaries preach, and love thee.

The missionary, in a few days after, saw him standing on the sea-shore, looking very intently as the ships came in.

"What are you looking at, Tom?"

"I am looking to see if Jesus Christ answers my prayer."

For two years he was seen, day after day, watching the arrival of every ship. One day, as the missionary was viewing him, he observed him capering about, and exhibiting the liveliest joy.

"Well, Tom, what occasions so much joy?"

"Oh, Jesus Christ answers prayer. Father and mother came in that ship."

This was actually the case.—*Westminster Review*.

Original Poetry.

"OUR TRIALS OFTEN LIGHT COMPARED WITH THOSE
OF OTHERS."

(Lines suggested by reading the tale of sorrow recorded in the O. S. Magazine, p. 380.)

Silent with grief the childless widow sat,
While others of her sex recount their woes;
Some speak of this sore trouble, some of that,
Some of domestic broils, and some of foes;
But still the saddened matron, with a sigh,
Replied to each—"No real grief is high,
Be therefore grateful to thy God on high,
That trouble is not yet."

Some enter still more deep the shades of grief,
And tell of midnight watching o'er the bed
Of this or that loved friend, without relief,—
Of husbands—children—numbered with the dead;
But even now that stricken mourner cried—
"Thy sorrows yet are far from full spring-tide:
Though sharp and keen, they shall not still abide.
Thou knowest not trouble yet."

Amazed her audience looked—in wonder gazed,—
As though no sympathy her bosom bore,
Until one kindly voice at length was raised—
"Tell thine own case—the sum of trouble sore—
That from thy sad experience all may see
How drops of mercy in each cup there be;
Yea, floating blessings in life's briny sea!
For trouble thou hast seen."

"At thy request, dear lady, I will tell
 The pregnant chapters of my gloomy lot,
 For sorrow's depths to me are known full well—
 Experience sad with me has been dear bought;
 Should others learn from mine to be content,
 One reason may be shown why grief was sent,
 Though my lone heart should be with sorrows rent!
These ladies know not grief!

In early life fond parents me caressed,
 Their house the home of love! with comforts meet—
 With care, and counsels wise, my youth was blest,
 Affection's circle, cherished friends so sweet!
 No murky cloud swept o'er my summer sky—
 No wintry storm in wrath came sweeping by—
 In sunshine rare, I hoped to live and die!
I feared not sorrow then.

Nor did the change from youth to wedded life,
 In one respect, disturb my dreams of joy;
 My home of love was far removed from strife—
 Domestic bliss was mine without alloy;
 My husband dearer was than all on earth—
 My house the happy seat of prudent mirth—
 My soul *then* never knew of joy the dearth,
In that retreat of bliss!

Years rolled away—five children graced our board—
 A sixth, belov'd of all, clung to my breast;
 On every side our home with comforts stored—
 Alas! that on such things the heart should rest!
 No heaven on earth has e'er yet found a place—
 The fairest scenes below their griefs must trace,
 Till crowned they be, who win the Christian's race,
Where sorrows are unknown!

Thus was it with my paradise so fair,
 The gathering cloud at eve foretold the storm.
 That gloomy night we watched, with anxious care,
 For morning's dawn, as for an angel's form;
 But morning's light disclosed the rising flood,
 Submerging all at once our earthly good,
 And circling round the summit where we stood.
Danger was near—not grief.

With mother's instinct, quick I left our home,
 Bearing my babe into a safe retreat,
 Trusting that soon my husband dear would come,
 Leading our children to my mossy seat;
 But, grasping fondly at our garnered store,
 Father and children sank to rise no more,
Then grief's first wave thus swept my spirit o'er!
Rude was that fatal shock!

No wife has ever loved a husband more—
 None else could know the pangs which wrung my heart,
 When wounded thus unto the very core—
 Constrained by sudden death from him to part;
 Near though I was, I had no power to save—
 I saw him swept at once beneath the wave;
 But for my child, I could have shared his grave,
So deep was sorrow then!

My lovely boys now saw impending fate—
 The encircling waters rushed without control;
 All chance of flight was now, alas, too late!
 I cried for help while anguish wrung my soul!
 Their hands to me were raised—then pointed up—
 Death's signal!—filling full a mother's cup—
 Shocked by the scene, faint hope became bankrupt,
 Under the sweeping stroke!

I pressed my baby to my bleeding breast,
 In that drear spot, where desolation spread,
 But higher rose the waters towards the crest
 Of that lone mound—sad scene of fear and dread!
 I climbed aloft into a shady tree,
 Which lent its shelter to my child and me:
 All else was gone beneath that stormy sea!
 Could greater grief remain?

My darling babe was all that storm had left—
 My only earthly hope for which I prayed;
 I laboured hard while now of all bereft,
 That live he might, and be with grace arrayed.
 His mental progress did my grief assuage;
 I did with truths divine his mind engage,
 And leaned upon him as the stay of age.
 'Twas thus I lived in hope.

Alas! youth's passions, by companions nursed,
 Soon led him to reject a mother's love—
 A heavier storm than Nature's early burst
 With sorrow's elements my head above.
 This time my house was left—my children gone—
 Still wilder gusts of passion hurled him on,
 While darker waves of sorrow rose anon.
 This was the death of peace!

My broken spirit clung to sinking hope,
 My cry of grief went up with plaintive moan;
 No longer could I with his vices cope,
 Recorded must he be—UNGRATEFUL SON!
 Debauched with wine, he aimed the fatal blow,
 Which in a scene of strife his friend laid low,
 And caused my soul with grief to overflow.
 This was the ocean's depth!!

The prison, with its chain and gloomy cell,
 More dreadful was than raging storms before;
 'Tis vain the anguish of my soul to tell—
 Death's bitter cup was filled, *yea, running o'er!*
 The scaffold came—the ignominious grave—
 To me the ocean depths of sorrow's wave—
 From which no earthly power my soul could save.
 THIS—THIS WAS TROUBLE'S SEA!!!

But, Christian mourner, give not way to grief,
 Light is thy cross, yea, softly lined with love;
 In Gilead's balm thy heart may find relief,
 Thine only refuge sure is God above.
 'The Man of sorrows' once the cup partook,
 When storms of wrath the gloomy garden shook—
 While towards the mount he crossed Cedron's brook.
 Fierce rose the billows then!!

Yet could He say, 'My Father's will be done,'
 Though darkest clouds of grief surround my soul—
 Let wrath divine descend my head upon—
 Let ocean's billows fierce around me roll—
The cup of sorrow's mine!—Salvation theirs!
 Who of eternal life are destined heirs!
 Then, mourners, free your souls from passing cares,
 Heaven shall all be bliss !!!"

REMINISCENCES OF THE EARLY TIMES OF THE SECESSION — HISTORICAL, BIOGRAPHICAL, AND TRADITIONAL.

To the reader of Scottish ecclesiastical history, it is a well-known fact that certain districts in the west of Scotland were greatly distinguished by being the scenes where many of the Covenanters fought and fell in the defence of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus. At the time of the Reformation and subsequent persecution, the shires of Lanark, Ayr, and Dumfries, were inhabited generally by these Worthies—a race of men, and of women, too, who, we believe, for an ardent attachment to pure and undefiled religion, high moral principle, and true patriotism, were never excelled in this or in any other land. Like the Waldenses and the Albigenses of a former age, these giants in religion might well be called the saviours of their country. For twenty-eight long years they braved the fires of a civil persecution; and, while of thousands it may truly be said, "their ashes flew, no marble tells us whither," and their souls to the mansions of bliss, a remnant was preserved to see the dawn of a happier day, when the persecutor was hurled from his throne, and the cause for which their fathers and brothers had suffered to the death, gloriously triumphant, in the establishment of civil and religious liberty. It is true that at the Revolution, along with the last of the intolerant Stuart dynasty, the grand distinguishing principles of the Covenanted Reformation, so far as the national profession was concerned, were swept away, and a time-serving expediency, cloaked under a "desire for peace," substituted in their room. But even under this baneful atmosphere, love to the precious truths and principles which the Nation then rejected, and the Church sadly neglected, continued to burn in many a bosom, and to be cherished in many a home in the west of Scotland; and the good seed sown during that twilight period of the Church may be traced to some extent in their descendants to the present day.

It was a partial revival of the Reformation cause within the Established Church that led to the Secession of 1733. As might have been expected, that movement was hailed with joy by the friends of truth as a token of the Lord's return to the land. Even in those localities which had become ice-bound in the frigid zone of Moderatism, the flame of evangelical religion burst forth and spread so rapidly that the chief concern of the degenerate General Assembly of

1738 was how they might extinguish it, and "reclaim those deluded people, and prevent the increase of a schism so dangerous to the peace of the Church, so contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, so hurtful to religion and serious godliness, to Christian charity and brotherly love."

But in no place was there a greater attachment to Reformation principles, and a desire for the evangelical preaching of the Gospel at that period, than in the west of Scotland. The chisel of "Old Mortality" had more than matched the effacing fingers of time; and the goodly stones of the temple had been preserved until the time came which the great Master Builder had set for restoring them out of the desolations of many generations. The calls made on the Secession fathers, in consequence of this awakening, were very numerous and urgent; and often would they have left their congregations for weeks together, that they might preach the Gospel to others also. Many a soul-stirring sermon was delivered by them on these occasions; and, as like the parched ground of the desert, which greedily drinketh up the showers of rain, so did those thirsty souls draw living water from the wells of salvation. Even *we* have listened with uncommon joy to the tale of an aged Christian, in pointing out the grassy sward where his sire had sat for several hours, and fancied they were minutes, hearing the Word of God from the lips of an Erskine, and witnessing, at the close, the baptism of fifty children at one time.

Of the interesting places we have in view, we mean at present to refer particularly to those of Lockerby and Sanquhar, in Dumfriesshire.

The hills and the dales, the moors and the glens, in the neighbourhood of Lockerby, had been often watered by the blood of the martyrs; and in these places multitudes had listened to the precious Word of life, "by Cameron thundered, or by Renwick poured in gentle streams." But the Gospel of Christ is the same in every age—"The wisdom of God and the power of God to every one that believeth"—and, under the rule of a more benign Providence, it was now poured forth in all its majesty from the lips of the Secession fathers.

The Secession obtained an early footing in Lockerby. A congregation was formed there in the year 1745, and is said to have been composed at first of five families only. They were a small but chosen band—all lineal descendants of the Covenanters, and, like their noble ancestors, were neither afraid nor ashamed to espouse the cause of Christ. In 1746, the year following, they called, and had settled among them, Mr George Murray, a licentiate of the Associate Synod. Though their beginning was small, they rapidly grew and multiplied, and, along with the active and faithful ministrations of their pastor, were the means of producing a marked revival of religion in the district.

The great object proposed by the Original Seceders was the maintenance of a public testimony for Reformation attainments both in Church and State. They held the doctrine that men are not only bound to believe the truths of God's Word, but, in their associated capacity, to make a public, national profession of them; and hence it

was, that, on separating from the Established Church, they assumed the broad ground of the Reformation, so far as their circumstances admitted, and served themselves heirs to the rights and obligations of their fathers. On the principle of the moral identity of society, they recognised the National Covenants into which the Church and Nation had entered for promoting true religion as binding on all posterity, and therefore it was that, as an ecclesiastical body and as congregations, they renewed, in their own persons, these national deeds. The congregation of Lockerby was among the foremost in that good work. The session of the congregation early passed a resolution as to the duty of public covenanting, and, after a course of instruction, from the pulpit and otherwise, on the subject of that divine ordinance, the Covenants were solemnly renewed at Lockerby in the year 1748. On that occasion 147 persons joined in the bond. They were also renewed in that congregation in the years 1749, 1752, 1754, 1775, 1785, and in 1810. This fact indicated a lively state of religion among the people; and Mr Murray had the satisfaction of seeing 536 of his members become public Covenanters. The members who actually joined in that important work were few by comparison; but it is recorded that the solemn services on these occasions, which were waited on by multitudes, made a deep impression on the surrounding community, and in many instances were followed by striking instances of conversion, and led others to enquire after the ways of truth and holiness.

SANQUHAR.

To mention the name of this little town is sufficient to produce a thrill in the bosom of every true Scottish Presbyterian. The locality of which it is the centre was rendered famous as a place of retreat and shelter to many of our Scottish Worthies during the persecuting times. The scenery in its immediate vicinity wears a magnificent aspect, and is unrivalled for its pastoral beauty and sweetness. Surrounded by mountains and glens, rocky eminences looking destruction on the yawning chasms below, grassy swards and silvery streams, a scene is presented to the eye which can scarcely be equalled, and has even been deemed worthy of a panoramic exhibition in the first cities of the nation. But much as we are called to admire the works of nature as the works of God, a far higher scene is presented to the mind when we contemplate the special Providence which constituted that part of the country into a city of refuge for the oppressed people of God. While, on the one hand, they had been brought in his mysterious Providence into the fire of persecution, he often vouchsafed to them, in a wonderful manner, shelter and deliverance from their persecutors in the dens and caves with which the locality abounded. And it was from the market-cross of Sanquhar that the Covenanters proclaimed their famous Declaration, which materially contributed to the overthrow of the oppressor and the re-establishment of constitutional freedom at the Revolution.

As at Lockerby, the principles espoused by the Secession Fathers met with a warm response in and around Sanquhar. The anti-revolution generation had not wholly passed away, and some of those who

had not felt freedom in acceding to the settlement of 1690, readily joined the Reformation standard under the banner of the Secession Testimony. As in other places, the Associate Synod was unable for a time to grant them more than a partial supply of ordinances; but when it was made known that there would be a sermon by a Secession minister, the whole district were moved, and vast multitudes assembled to hear the Gospel. The precise date of their being formed into a congregation cannot now be ascertained, but circumstances combine in showing that it must have been previous to the year 1750. Their first minister was a young man of the name of Ballantine. He is still spoken of by aged persons in the place as having been an earnest and powerful Gospel minister, and his eminent piety has borne down his name with a sweet savour to the present day. His field of labour was arduous in the extreme, extending over the mountains and through the valleys of five parishes; but by extraordinary and indefatigable exertions, he endeavoured to reach the most distant corners with the Word of Life. But his career was short. Like young Hunter of Gateshaw, he was early called away from the labours and trials of the church below, to enjoy the blessedness of the Church in Heaven. Mr Ballantine was not only a diligent workman in the Lord's vineyard, but, like all genuine Seceders, deeply attached to the principles of the Covenanted Church of Scotland. He carefully instructed his people in the duty and privilege of publicly espousing the cause of Christ; and before his brief ministry among them was brought to a close by the hand of death, he had the happiness of leading them to make a solemn devotement of themselves to God by a renewal of our national vows.

Soon after this event Mr Ballantine's health began to give way, under the insidious and fatal working of pulmonary consumption, which doubtless was accelerated by his unwearied exertions in promoting the Lord's work in the congregation. When at last his emaciated and weakened frame indicated too clearly that he "must shortly put off this clay tabernacle," he called a private meeting of his elders for religious conversation and prayer, and with a calmness of spirit which indicated a firm persuasion of his interest in the Saviour, he communicated to them the solemn circumstances in which he found himself placed. At the close he said—"Now, brethren, my time for visiting you is over; I hope you will continue to visit me while I am here." His deep anxiety for the welfare of his congregation, and of the church at large, continued to his last moments; and when the summons for his departure came, he yielded up his ministry, ~~along~~ with his immortal part, with Christian resignation, into the hands of Him who gave them, and entered, we doubt not, into the arms of his Lord. He was interred in the church-yard of Sanquhar, and his resting-place is marked by a stone, bearing the following ~~words~~ said to have been composed by Ralph Erskine:—

This sacred herald, whose sweet mouth
Spread Gospel truth abroad,
Like Timothy, was but a youth,
And yet a man of God.

Soon did the young and ready scribe
 A friend for Christ appear,
 And was among the associate tribe
 A covenanted seer.

He for the Reformation cause—
 Contending for renown—
 Among that noted number was
 The first that gained the crown.

His zealous soul, with hasty pace,
 Did mortal life despise,
 To feed the lambs around the place
 Where now his body lies.

After the death of Mr Ballantine, the congregation was for some time vacant. They were spread, as we have said, over an extensive tract of country; and on the Sabbaths when they had not sermon, they would have met in parties at those spots, "still to memory dear" as the meeting-places of their martyred fathers, for social worship, and often enjoyed sweet intercourse and fellowship with one another. The next minister of the congregation was a Mr Goodlet, also said to have been greatly distinguished as a man of piety and as a powerful preacher of the Gospel. Like his predecessor, he was early removed by the will of his Heavenly Master, but not till he had led the congregation a second time to devote themselves in solemn covenant to God. He was succeeded by Mr Andrew Thomson, who was honoured to labour in the congregation down to 1816, being over a period of nearly 50 years. In the course of his lengthened ministry, the Secession cause took deep root, and spread extensively in the west of Scotland; and it is delightful to record, that in many of the families of its adherents a stream of piety may be traced backward, from son to sire, from the present time to the days of the Covenanters. The Covenants were renewed at Sanquhar on three occasions during the ministry of Mr Thomson.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. JOHN AITKEN, LATE OF ABERDEEN.

THE subject of this memoir was in various important respects a model of what is most becoming the Christian, the Christian parent and pastor, and the public witness of the cause of God. He long occupied a high place in the affection and esteem not only of the ministers and members of the Original Secession Church, but also of a large circle of Christian friends and acquaintances in other denominations; and his memory is and shall be long blessed. His general conduct in its varied aspects was adorning to his profession, his conversation was heavenly, his friendships were warm and constant, and his discharge of the duties of his office in all its departments was assiduous. His private studies were systematic, and prosecuted with great diligence; his visitations of the sick and dying were abundant and affectionate.

In each member of his flock he felt an interest corresponding to that which one feels in those belonging to his own family, and in his public ministrations he proved himself to be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Like Apollos, he was mighty in the Scriptures. His discourses were delivered with a rare degree of emotion—the concomitant of speaking from the heart and from faith, as well as the answer of prayer and the effect of the gracious support of his Divine Master. His prayers in public and private were remarkable for their fulness and sweetness to the spiritual taste. He therefore enjoyed a popularity of the best kind throughout his public ministry till within a short time before his death, when the growing infirmities that were the precursors of that event incapacitated him for the performance of public work with his wonted ease and fluency.

There are ample materials of various kinds in relation to Mr Aitken whence a volume of profitable reading could be furnished, so that the difficulty is how to select and compress that portion of them to which our limits restrict us. We are satisfied that the greater part of our readers will gladly grant us the indulgence of giving more space in our pages than is usual in such cases to a sketch of the life of this devoted and beloved servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mr Aitken was born at Kirriemuir, the 13th of December, 1789. He states in his diary, "that for a long time he was so weak, he frequently heard his mother say, that she hung over his cradle expecting to see him breathe his last." He adds: "I have been spared; perhaps the Lord had some good for me to accomplish in the world." He enjoyed privileges of early training, in respect of example, instruction, and varied means of spiritual good, very rarely equalled.

His father, the Rev. James Aitken of Kirriemuir, was a Presbyterian minister of the first rank in his own or any former age in Scotland, distinguished as it is for the many Presbyters of high name which it has produced. He was one of the four ministers present at the first meeting of the Constitutional Presbytery in August, 1806; and though he was not led to put forth his energies in writing for the press as his illustrious compeers—the great M'Crie, and Bruce of Whitburn—those who know him best will be forward to admit that in various respects he was not a whit behind his able associates in a noble cause, and that he took his appropriate place as one of the "first three." Mr Aitken of Kirriemuir was distinguished for the breadth and clearness of his views of Bible truth, for the simplicity and power with which he proclaimed in his ministrations the great doctrines of the Gospel, combined with an impressive exhibition of the law enforced by evangelical motives, and also for his zeal in regard to the maintenance of purity of communion in the Church, and the faithful administration of scriptural discipline.

He was the first Secession minister in Kirriemuir—a place which, at the time of his settlement, was notorious in the surrounding country for its wickedness. When he began his ministry there, the adherents of the Secession cause were few, and in poor outward circumstances; but, under his pastoral care, they came at length to be a

flourishing congregation. Few have had more satisfactory evidence that the Lord had given them souls for their hire than Mr Aitken had. For many years, almost every member of his congregation was the regular attendant of a prayer-meeting, either male or female. The Covenants were renewed four times during his ministry in the congregation; and there is no room for reasonable doubt that many souls were gathered to Christ, and brought home to glory, in that part of the Church, before he was himself taken to the heavenly rest. And though this congregation has been severely tried by various dispensations since, and was sadly broken by the defection of a large number of its members who acceded to the Free Church in 1852, there are still a precious seed remaining; and it is very cheering to see, under the ministry of their present able and energetic young pastor, a considerable recovery from the effects of that disastrous movement, and the prospect of restoration to a measure of its former prosperity brightening.

Enjoying the early, assiduous, and prayerful training of such a parent, the subject of this memoir might indeed be said, in the best sense, to have been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. And there are also records, combined with traditions in the most authentic form, which show that Mr Aitken was no less highly favoured in the character of his mother in her place than in that of his father in his. And we are sure that our readers will not think that they are detained, when we ask them to turn aside and contemplate for a little the many excellencies of this devoted christian, as these are presented to us in the testimonies borne to her worth by those who knew her best.

Mrs James Aitken was one of the Fergusons of Kinnmundy—a family, as is known to most of our readers, long distinguished for fidelity to the principles of the Secession, the hospitalities and countenance of which were enjoyed by Mr Moncrieff of Abernethy, who visited the north at their solicitation, and preached at their house the first sermon in connection with the Secession in that part of the country. (See *Original Secession Magazine*, Vol. II., pp. 587–8). Not a few of that family have been distinguished for intelligence, and among these the mother of Mr Aitken occupied no mean place. The testimonies regarding her, written by her husband to her brother, Mr Ferguson, after her death, without the least view to publication, demonstrate the high estimate formed of her character by one who, though no doubt a somewhat partial judge, had the best means of knowing this thoroughly—whose discrimination and tests of character were very high, and who would not have willingly employed, in this or any other case, an expression which was not consistent with truth. And it has been well remarked, that it is good when near relations, who have the best opportunities of knowing each other in all circumstances, can bear honourable testimony to our character and life. From the letter referred to, we give the following extract:—

KIRRIEMUIR, 28th May, 1822.

DEAR BROTHER— Our sister (Miss Ferguson, Mr Aitken's sister-in-law, and Mr Ferguson's sister) has been a great blessing and comfort, especially to my daughter, on the trying occasion which has passed over us. She will give you many particulars of the death-bed of my dear departed wife,

which I have neither time nor room to commit to paper. In general, that word was strikingly exemplified at her death—"Mark the perfect, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." She attained, by grace, the nearest to the character of "the perfect," in respect of resembling the holy image and example of our Saviour through the whole of her life, of any saint with whom I ever was acquainted. A good part of the epitaph on your godly mother, appears to me as if she had been the person described—"As much of innocence as could consist with fatal descent from the first transgressor, meekness of wisdom, simplicity in Christ, were all in her conspicuous," &c. Through a life of near forty years passed in my company, I cannot, on the most careful recollection, call up to my view a single spot. She appeared to me to make it her constant study to do what was pleasing to God, and useful to those with whom she was connected, and that with an almost total disregard of her personal ease or self pleasing. Though a continual savour of holiness was thus diffused through every part of her conduct, she was imbued with the deepest humility and lowliest thoughts of herself; so that she often, especially during her last sickness, applied, with great emphasis and feeling, that epithet to herself—"sinners, of whom *I am chief*;" and would add—"Were it not for the infinitely precious blood of the Son of God, I could have no hope." Her life, since she became mine, was a life of daily communion with God, and as it drew nearer to a close, the communion appeared to become more constant and more intimate. During the last two years, and especially the last, her mind seemed to be almost withdrawn from every sublunary object. She engaged little in any conversation but what was spiritual, and for that she was always ready. A very large part of her time was employed in reading the Bible, in secret prayer, and spiritual meditation, particularly in calling to her remembrance what she had heard on Sabbath. By this constant practice of meditation on the sermons, even her memory increased to a surprising degree, so that she seldom forgot the particulars of the sermons. Besides different times during the day, it was her usual manner, for a long time past, to be not less than an hour on her knees after we were all gone to bed. Often, when awaking from my first sleep, have I found her so employed. At those times, I believe she was enabled to "make known her requests as to *every thing*"—not only her personal concerns, but those of all her friends, and those of Zion. The benefit of which supplications has been already enjoyed, in part, and I trust will be so more abundantly. When regretting, on her death-bed, that she had been so little spiritual, I expressed my surprise, reminding her of the above "abounding in prayer." She replied, "He did enable me sometimes to cry unto Him; but, oh! how soon did my heart become carnal again!" As she was enabled to "live to the Lord," so was she to "die to the Lord"—living and dying she was the Lord's. It was none of His least kindnesses, both to her and to me, that from the last Sabbath of her being in the kirk, neither of us ever entertained for a moment a doubt that death was approaching. This made us all along speak about it in the most easy and familiar manner. Through life, notwithstanding all her attainments in holiness, she might be said to have been a timid Christian, or rather entertained a constant holy jealousy with respect to herself, which excited her to a constant course of holy diligence to "make her election and calling sure." But during her last illness, though a fullness of spiritual joy was not granted to her, her faith never seemed to be shaken, nor was she distressed with any uneasy fears. Though she had many gracious experiences during life, she spoke little of them, nor did she seem in the least to build upon them, but solely upon Christ, as revealed in the Word—the all-sufficient, the all-willing, the only Saviour of lost sinners. The unlimited calls, the absolute free promises of the Gospel, were the only ground of her confidence, many of which she was in the practice of repeating, and they seemed the constant subjects of her meditation, particularly 1 John v. 11:—"This is the record that God hath given to us (to me, said she) eternal life." "This," said she, "is my sheet-anchor." Our sister will tell you what a pleasant scene the closing one was. I will never forget the pleasing tone in which she said to me, less than half an hour before her departure—"The days of my mourning are ended." A little before she had said—"Into thine hands I commit," &c.; "my flesh and heart faint," &c.; "but God is my portion for ever." And within a few seconds of her last breath, she desired me to sing, "Although I walk in death's dark vale," &c.; during the singing of which her soul entered into the world of everlasting praise. I have left no room for reflections on this event, one of the most

important to me in the course of my pilgrimage. Seek for me a spirit of thankfulness for the long blessed loan I had of her from the Father of my mercies—that a double portion of her spirit may fall down upon me and her relatives—that we may be enabled to “follow her in the faith and patience through which she now inherits the promises”—that her prayers for us and for Zion may be answered, and that the want of her sweet and precious society may be made up by the presence of Him who alone can say—“I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee.”

This testimony needs no comment: it speaks for itself from such a competent witness. What wonders has grace done, and shall it yet do! Who that can form a just estimate of gracious attainment, would not covet earnestly some true likeness to this portrait? What Christian should not pray that such may be multiplied in the Church of God in our world.

The statements of the husband's letter are corroborated by those of the son, the subject of this memoir, in a letter written from Kirriemuir to Mrs Aitken, dated May 18th, 1822, from which we also give an extract.

Mr Aitken had seen his mother in passing from Aberdeen to Crieff, where he was to preach; and he wrote the letter whence our extract is taken to Mrs Aitken, when he returned to Kirriemuir after his mother had departed, which event, though he had been informed of it by a letter received at Crieff, could not fail to make a deep impression. In this letter he says:—

“You will easily suppose that I feel keenly under this event, but it is a feeling of a peculiar nature. When I came into the house, my heart was like to burst, but at the same time it was filled with joy; and the more I think of the dispensation, and all the circumstances, I am the more disposed to rejoice. I feel no wish that it had been otherwise. She had served her generation by the will of God, and has come down to the grave as a shock of corn fully ripe. I think I can enter a little into the spirit of the words of Christ—‘If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I go to the Father.’ I surely loved her in a very high degree, not merely because she was my mother, but because I saw so much of the image of my God in her; and I now rejoice, because, as she herself said, ‘the days of her mourning are ended,’ and she has entered on complete and everlasting blessedness. [Happy son, indeed, whose mourning was blended with such joy at such a season.] Though all the graces of the spirit were conspicuous in her character, there were some eminently so; one of these was *humility*. She had the deepest sense of her own unworthiness, and this seemed to grow much during the latter part of her life. She looked upon herself as the chief of sinners, and nothing was more painful to her than to hear people speak well of her. She was vexed at the way in which the elders and others prayed about her, and frequently expressed this. In connection with this, another leading trait in her character was *tenderness of conscience*. She had a deep sense of the evil of sin, and was afraid, above all things, of offending God. Again, a *love of ordinances* was conspicuous. There was no show of religion, but it was impossible for those about her not to perceive that everything of a temporal kind was subordinate, in her view, to spiritual objects. Her Bible was her daily and her delightful companion, and she spent much time on her knees. She went to God as her Father and her friend. The praying society was never neglected. Many of its most valuable members have gone before, particularly Mary Chaplin, and she has now gone to join them in the better world. And the house of God was her delight. Difficulties which would have prevented others did not prevent her, for there she found her highest enjoyment, and therefore broke through all. I might have mentioned *zeal* for the glory of God, and the good of souls, as another prominent part of her character. The cause we are owning lay near her heart, and she used every means in her power to do good to those around

her. Many instances of this doubtless are yet hid. Margaret * has mentioned one, which my father knew nothing of." [We do not adduce the striking instance referred to from respect to the feelings of any surviving relative of the individual whose good she so earnestly sought.]

Through the Divine blessing, the effects of Mr Aitken's rare advantages in having such parental training soon manifested themselves in various ways. His diligence and progress as a scholar must have been highly satisfactory, when he was prepared to enter the college at Aberdeen before he was fourteen years of age; and all his subsequent appearances corresponded with this, and proved that, though he had passed through all the stages of his training for the holy ministry, at a very early age, his studies had not been unduly hastened.

It is by no means an uncommon thing for those who have grown up in the atmosphere of varied religious influences, and have had deep impressions of the importance of divine and spiritual things in early years, to be unable to fix on any particular date as that of their conversion; and it does not appear that Mr Aitken traced the saving change wrought in him to any particular time. It has indeed been less common in the Secession, than in some other denominations of Christians, for persons to speak positively of their conversion as having taken place at this or that time. There are also not unfrequently various seasons in which those, who have enjoyed the example and counsels of godly parents and others, have special experiences to which they look back with interest, as Jacob did to Luz and Peniel; and they may be unable to say at which of these they were indeed made to pass from death to life, or whether it may not have been at some season which, though recorded in heaven, has found no place in the book of their remembrance; and they are and should be well satisfied if they have satisfactory evidence that, though they were once blind, they now truly see.

Mr Aitken frequently referred to the death of a young lady about his own age, as having made a deep and salutary impression on his mind. This young woman, a Miss Ferguson, was a cousin of his own, and died in the spring during his first year at college, in his uncle's house in Aberdeen, in which he himself lived. To this event his father makes very special reference in a letter written to him at that time, which is given in the memoir prefixed to the volume of his sermons published in 1836. This letter furnishes very clear evidence of the earnestness with which the father sought by every means to promote the spiritual welfare of his son at this stage.

* It is his sister of whom Mr Aitken here speaks as knowing what her father did not know. Miss Aitken was a few years older than her brother. She was also a person of great worth—a very intelligent, public-spirited, and exemplary Christian—who inherited and manifested a large portion of the spirit of both her parents. She was distinguished by a spirit of enlarged benevolence, and laid out her talents in doing good to the bodies and to the souls of men. She had great delight in those who gave evidence that they truly feared the Lord. Though warmly attached to the cause for which Original Seceders contended, her affectionate regards extended to all the people of God; and all that related to the interests of the kingdom of Christ in any part of the world was full of interest to her. Miss Aitken was a great sufferer for many years, the result of having had improper medicine administered to her, through the mistake of the apothecary, in a time of affliction in her youth; and in nothing did her Christian character shine more remarkably than in the fortitude and patience with which she bore the frequent and protracted attacks of the affliction which flowed from the cause mentioned. She was removed by death only a short time before Mr Aitken himself, and her last end also was truly peace.

The letter is dated March 29, 1804, and we give some brief extracts from it, containing a pattern for imitation and lessons of instruction, which are ever applicable to some, and which many need to learn.

"What important events," says he, "have occurred since I last wrote you! Particularly, how important to you, as well as other relatives, is that change which has taken place in your uncle's family! The Lord has a variety of ends to serve, and many lessons to teach different persons, by an event of His providence; and you may be assured that it is not for nought He has so ordered it that you should be one of the family at the time when our Lord sent His messenger of death to call hence your now (as I trust) glorified cousin.

"Many lessons the Lord has been setting before you in this event. But it is only His own Spirit and grace that can teach them effectually unto you, and 'open your ears to the discipline' and instruction which He designs you should receive from them. And for these you should be daily praying, for He teaches by providences as well as by ordinances. One striking lesson you have got is, that death may come to you in the days of your youth.

"Another important lesson is, that there is a reality in religion—that it is no fancy, dream or delusion, as many in the present age account it. You have seen it to be such as can support and comfort a soul under the near prospect of the most awful and shocking event to our nature—viz, death. Your thrice-happy cousin had the full, certain, and near prospect of leaving this world, and every enjoyment of it—of parting with relations unspeakably dear to her, not to see them again 'till the heavens be no more.' She also had the prospect of entering, within a few hours—perhaps within a few minutes—into the invisible and eternal state. Yet having all these things full in her view, did you observe any signs of fear about her? Was she not calm, collected, and composed? What a testimony was there to the truth of religion! What gave her all this composure? Just that which made the Psalmist look on death with such ease long ago—'My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.' Be concerned then to treasure up this lesson of the reality of religion, and of the 'power of godliness,' in your heart."

Of this event Mr Aitken himself says, in his remarks introducing his father's letter, that it was "most delightful and confirming."

But though deep impressions were made on the mind of the youthful student by this dispensation, we are disposed to think that he had been made a sharer of saving grace anterior to this. This is inferred from the tone of his father's letters to him. They strongly indicate that his father had freedom in writing him, as one who felt a true interest in divine and spiritual things. There is an instinctive feeling of this kind which is often manifested unconsciously, and seems to have been so by Mr Aitken's father at this time.

The ardent prosecution of secular learning has often a deadening effect on youthful piety; but by this event, and other things, the tendency of this seems to have been effectually counteracted in the case of Mr Aitken. The prosecution of his studies was combined with the cultivation of fellowship with God and a watchful care of his own heart. In July (this year 1806) he says, in his diary:—

"I renewed my baptismal engagements at the Lord's table. I recollect that at this time I was in much slavish fear and distraction, which prevented me from having such distinct exercise as I would have desired. But I think I was then enabled to take a Three-one God in Christ as my God for time and eternity, and to give myself to the Lord to be his for ever. That passage was very comforting to me subsequent to that occasion—'Fear not, I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God,' &c. In the winter following, which was my last session at College, owing to the sad departure of the Associate Synod from their principles, and the

mournful division which followed, I was deprived of public ordinances. The first two Sabbaths I remained in my own room ; but afterwards a handful, who had got their eyes opened with respect to the cause of Christ, joined together in a praying society, which I attended, and found great comfort in it. I think during that winter I enjoyed something of the Lord's presence, though I failed greatly in yielding fruit corresponding to the favour conferred upon me."

Mr Aitken came thus to be very early associated with some very excellent persons in the congregation over which he was afterwards placed, and who were a great comfort and stay to him at the commencement of his ministry in Aberdeen—of whom he often spoke in terms of high commendation.

His studies were prosecuted at Aberdeen College four successive sessions, at the close of which he obtained the degree of Master of Arts. And in May, 1807, he was examined by the Constitutional Presbytery, at a meeting held at Edinburgh, with the view of entering on the study of Divinity; and, in August thereafter, he attended the Hall at Whitburn, where he enjoyed the valuable instructions of the celebrated Professor Bruce.

Owing to the scarcity of preachers, and no doubt also from respect to the high degree of qualification which this very youthful student possessed, he was urged by the Presbytery to enter on trials for license, after being only two years at the Hall; and so much was this pressed, that he felt called upon to submit—though, from a variety of considerations, he did so with great reluctance, and in particular his extreme youth.

In reference to this step he says—"The evening before I was entered on trial for license, being in much difficulty as to my duty herein, and sensible of my utter unfitness for the work, that word was very comforting to me, occurring in the ordinary place of my reading—'My grace is sufficient for thee,' &c." On the 25th of July, 1809, before he was twenty years of age, he was licensed, and his labours were so remarkably acceptable, that he soon received no less than four calls within a very short time. These were from congregations in Kelso, Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen.

It was a standing rule in the Secession Church, from the time that they took up their position as witnesses for the Covenanted Reformation (which has been and is maintained in the Original Secession), that none were to be licensed as preachers of the Gospel under the banner of the Testimony, which they had lifted up for the truth sworn to in these lands, till they had entered into the bond for renewing our solemn National Covenants, or given a pledge that they would embrace the first opportunity of engaging in this work. As was to be expected, this rule was strictly observed by the Constitutional Presbytery, and Mr Aitken entered into this bond during the time that he was on trials for license.

In March, 1809, he witnessed the solemn observance of this duty in the congregation at Haddington, but did not that time join in taking the bond; because, as he states, he had not had such opportunity of making himself acquainted with this in all its bearings as he could have wished (which is an instance of the care and tenderness

by which he was distinguished in such matters), and as he expected to have an opportunity of the same kind at Kirriemuir a few months after, when he would have given additional attention to the whole subject. It appears from this that in the Constitutional Presbytery, consisting of about ten or twelve congregations, at least two congregations engaged in the work of Covenant renovation that year.

"On the 20th of July, 1809," Mr Aitken states, in the record from which our quotations are taken, "I joined in the bond for renewing our Covenants at Kirriemuir. I had aimed at this exercise in private—making particular use of the bond as a guide in this dedication of myself to the Lord; and I hope, both in private and in public, I was enabled to lift up my heart with my hand to the Lord." As to the calls which he received, as stated above, he says—"This (the number of calls) was apt to elevate me too much; but I was in some degree, sensible of my own weakness and unworthiness, and I was crying that I might be kept humble."

(To be continued.)

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Dr Davidson: his Heresies, Contradictions, and Plagiarisms. By Two Graduates. London: Wertheim & MacIntosh. Manchester: Fletcher & Tubbs. 1857.

AN EXAMINATION of the *Facts, Statements, and Explanations* of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Davidson, relative to the second volume of the 10th edition of *Horne's Introduction*. By John Kelly, Liverpool. London: John Shaw. 1857.

DR DAVIDSON, whose sentiments and doings as a writer are so ably exposed in these two works, had acquired a considerable reputation both as a divine and as a scholar. Through this he came to be elevated to the honourable and highly responsible situation of a Professor in the Lancaster College, in connection with the influential body of English Independents, long distinguished for purity of doctrine and communion. In consequence of his supposed high standing as a theologian, when certain publishers resolved to issue a new edition of Horne's justly celebrated work, entitled *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, Dr Davidson was selected as one of the editors employed, to each of which a portion of the work, which consisted of four volumes, was committed. Having his part assigned him, Dr Davidson proceeded to recast the whole, so as to leave it no longer the work of the original author with some notes or additions of his own, but to render it an entirely new work, at the same time increasing his volume to the huge bulk of some 1100 pages. But this, though bad enough, would have been a small matter had the change been to the better, and had the great increase of matter consisted of sound materials. But it has turned out to be the very reverse of this, as is demonstrated in the publications before us.

In the work of the Two Graduates, Dr Davidson is clearly convicted of promulgating in his volume such views of inspiration as tend to

sap the foundations of faith in the Divine authority of the Scriptures, and render it impossible to know, were his principles and insinuations adopted, how much of the contents of the sacred books are to be received as the Word of God, and how much have no higher authority than that of erring men. They show further, that his views of the fundamental doctrines of the gospel—such as original sin and justification, and even as to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity—are grossly heretical. They prove farther that the work of Dr Davidson abounds with palpable contradictions. It is astonishing to think that a man who had obtained so high a name should show so little power of writing consistently, and such want of distinctness of judgment, as not only to contradict himself in different parts of his work, but frequently in the same page and in consecutive sentences.

But this is so far accounted for by the further charge which the writers of this pamphlet establish against him with such damaging effect—viz., that no small part of his work consists of unacknowledged translations from German divines. The way in which Dr Davidson did this is stated in the following passage, and striking instances are given which we cannot here insert:—"As a rule," say the writers, "the Doctor has had the sagacity to embellish, or in some way to modify the form of what he has taken from other authors. Sometimes he has omitted a word, sometimes inserted one; sometimes he has inverted the order of a sentence, sometimes transposed sentences; but, in the majority of cases, it is felt that he is only seeking ingeniously to veil his obligations. In his collation of authorities, it is rare indeed to see him travel beyond those which he happens to find in the writer from whom he is levying such large contributions. If, for instance, the writer in any particular volume of the *Exegetical Handbook* quote De Wetts, the Doctor quotes him; if Jahn, the Doctor quotes him; if Delilzsch, the Doctor quotes him. If the Doctor calls Whiston 'whimsical,' it is because his German original calls him 'baroke;' if the Doctor find in the name 'Charles Martel' an historical parallel to the name 'Maccabee,' it is because he has found it in Dr Grinim. In fact, we have marked brief passages, which together would fill a score of closely-printed pages—passages which, from their very form and peculiarity, Dr Davidson never could have penned, unless he had seen them first in the German; and yet he drops no hint of any obligation to any writer under Heaven."

It is very sad that one who stood so high in general estimation should have been left to render himself so contemptible in his aspirations after fame, as Dr Davidson has done; and from being in reputation for orthodoxy, should have also become so heretical. Nor has Dr Davidson, in the elaborate pamphlet which he has since written in the form of explanation, made his case any better, as any acknowledgments made are unsatisfactory. This is also distinctly shown by the "Two Graduates."

It is cause of thankfulness that the Committee of the English Independent Church, by a large majority, adopted measures which rendered it necessary for Dr Davidson to demit his Professors' Lancaster College; but it is cause of regret that a minority

symptoms of sympathy. This, along with the spirit lately manifested by a number of the leading ministers in that denomination in what has been called the "Rivulet Controversy"—from the name of a book of Hymns which gave rise to it, from which the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel were excluded—shows that the ministers of that large denomination of Christians, which had hitherto been distinguished by the maintenance of a pure Gospel, have come to be, to some considerable extent, leavened by some of the worst errors, and that there is a tendency to Socinianism among them, though yet under disguise; and it will be cause of joy to all the lovers of Gospel truth if the efforts which have been, and are being made, by Dr Campbell and his coadjutors shall, by the blessing of God, prove effectual in not only stemming the tide of error, but in thoroughly cleansing that section of the Christian Church from the taints of corrupt doctrine with which it has come to be infected.

The object of Mr Kelly in his able treatise, as stated in the preface, was to make it manifest that the committee had abundantly sufficient cause for the resolution which they passed regarding Dr Davidson after examining his pamphlet of explanations; and this he has convincingly accomplished.

Our space happening to be very limited, we can only give the concluding sentence of the committee's resolution, which is—

"It is therefore their painful duty to state, that on the grounds of these grave faults, and the rashness which he still exhibits in dealing with Divine truth, their confidence in him (Dr Davidson) as a Professor in this institution is greatly shaken; and that they view, with serious apprehension, the effect of his teaching and influence on the students committed to his care."

India: A Sermon on the Times. By the Rev. Alex. Munro, D.D. Bremner: Manchester.

DR MUNRO, our readers are aware, is one of the able witnesses for purity of worship against innovation in the Presbyterian Church of England. The sermon before us demonstrates that his talents as a preacher are of a very high order. It is a very masterly production—exceedingly appropriate, eloquent, pointed, replete with varied matter concisely stated, and withal practical.

The Superlative Worth and Dignity of the Faithful Martyrs; being a Sermon Preached at Allan's Cairn, in the Parish of Tynron, Dumfriesshire, on Sabbath, 12th July, 1857, by Peter Carmichael, Minister of the R. P. Church, Penpont. Dumfries: D. Halliday. 1857.

THIS sermon has just come to hand, and, without committing ourselves to an approbation of the practice of preaching at the graves of the martyrs, we hasten to award to it the meed of our high commendation, though, for want of room, this can only be done in a few words.

It is decidedly one of the best "public sermons"—as such discourses are sometimes called—that we have read for a long time. Mr Carmichael could scarcely have been more happy in the choice of a

text—Heb. xi. 38—"of whom the world was not worthy." The subject which these words natively suggest is ably and faithfully discussed. The principles for which the witnesses and martyrs of Jesus have contended and suffered are clearly stated and vindicated—the claims of these honoured men to the esteem, gratitude, and veneration of posterity, as instruments of unspeakable good to the Church and to the world, are ably set forth—and the duties which those who reap the fruits of their heroic deeds owe to their principles, and which are commended by their example, are powerfully enforced. There is frequently, also, a masterly exposure of the prevalent latitudinarianism of our age, against which the author himself has been a special witness. We are truly sorry that we cannot find room for extracts, which, on more than one of the leading topics of the discourse, we would have gladly given.

THE CARNOUSTIE PROPERTY CASE.

THE following are copy of interlocutor and note of Lord Benholme in deciding this case :—

12th November, 1857.—The Lord Ordinary, having heard parties' procurators on the closed record and productions, and made *avizandum*, sustains the title of the pursuers, and repels the first and second pleas in law for the defenders. And on the merits, Finds (1), That by disposition, dated 8th October, 1829, granted by William Duncan, weaver and manufacturer in Links of Carnoustie, he disposed in favour of certain persons as trustees, including the pursuers, John Cairncross and William Kidd, and the defenders, the Rev. James Meek, James Lorimer, and Robert Keay, the lot of ground specially described in the summons, upon which a church or meeting-house had been previously erected, and upon which a dwelling-house and offices were afterwards erected for the occupation of the minister of the chapel, Finds (2), That this disposition was granted in favour of the said persons "as trustees and managers appointed by, and in trust for behoof of, the Associate Congregation of Original Seceders in Carnoustie, in connection with the Associate Synod of Original Seceders, and presently under the pastoral inspection of the said Reverend James Meek, and adhering to the original principles of the Secession, as these are more particularly described in a book entitled, 'A Testimony for the Truths of Christ, Agreeably to the Westminster Standards, as received by the Reformed Church of Scotland, and in Opposition to Defections from the Reformation sworn to in Britain and Ireland,' enacted and emitted by the Associate Synod of Original Seceders at Edinburgh, the 18th day of May, 1827." And finds that the 1st and 6th purposes of the trust are thus expressed :—"Primo—That the said lot of ground, and others hereby disposed, is conveyed to, and shall be held by, the said trustees, in trust and for behoof of the foresaid Associate Congregation of Original Seceders at Carnoustie, to whom solely, and those who shall in time coming accede to them, and continue in adherence to the foresaid original principles of the Secession, the said subjects shall belong; and if in future any question at any time shall arise among the members of the said congregation, respecting their adherence to said principles, it shall be determined in favour of those members, for the time being, who shall be ready to subscribe an affirmative answer to the five first questions of the formula, framed and enacted by the Associate Synod of Original Seceders at Edinburgh, the 18th May, 1827, to be put at the ordination of ministers and elders." "Secundo—That any trustee permanently removing from the bounds of the said Congregation, or leaving the foresaid principles, or otherwise becoming disconnected with the said Congregation, shall forfeit his right as trustee, and that *ipso facto*, and without any formal vote of the Congregation laying him aside." Finds (3), That the Associate Synod of Original Seceders having, in 1842, on occasion with their union with another body of Dissenters, assumed the title of the Synod of United Original Seceders, there was, on the 27th April, 1852, laid

before that Synod (with whom the Congregation at Carnoustie were in connection) an overture for an union with the Free Church on the grounds therein set forth, and on this footing, *inter alia*, "it being also distinctly understood that we hold by the standards and constitution of the Church of Scotland, not as these may have been explained in any act or acts of the Free Church, but as they are stated and defined in our own testimony." Finds (4), That this overture was adopted by a narrow majority of the Synod, including the defender, the Reverend James Meek; and that a protest was taken by the minority, who, in respect, the majority had resolved to drop their judicial testimony for the Covenanted Reformation, claimed for themselves and those adhering to them to be constitutionally the Synod of United Original Seceders. Finds (5), That the proposed union was completed on the 1st June, 1852, through the medium of certain acts of the Free Church in reference to a representation and appeal of the said majority of the Synod, by the later of which the said majority proposed to drop their testimony as a separate Church, and to become incorporated into the Free Church upon this footing, *inter alia*, "it being also distinctly understood that we hold by the standards and constitution of the Church of Scotland, not only as these may have been explained in any act or acts of the Free Church, but also as they are stated and defended in our own testimony." "And by which acts the Free Church agree to the proposal of re-union made in the said representation and appeal, and fully consent that their brethren continue free to hold the views therein set forth, and to enjoy the liberty therein claimed, in subordination to the discipline and government of this Church. Finds (6), That shortly thereafter, at a meeting of the Carnoustie congregation, the defenders, members of that congregation, resolved to join the Free Church on the footing of the foreshaid union, and that the defenders subsequently formed an union with the Free Church, through the Free Church Presbytery of Arbroath, and have since continued members of the Free Church. Finds (7), That by the said union the defenders have abandoned their separate testimony and adherence to the principles of religious belief and church discipline established by the conveyance of 8th October, 1829, as constituting the qualification of members of the congregation for whose benefit the Carnoustie chapel was settled in trust by the said conveyance, and finds that these principles are in important not identified with, or embraced by, those of the Free Church, as ascertained by their authentic acts and documents. Therefore, finds and declares in terms of the first five declaratory conclusions of the summons. And, *quod ultra*, appoints the case to be enrolled for further procedure.

(Signed) H. J. ROBERTSON.

NOTE.—On the question of title in this case little was said at the bar. Whilst the defenders certainly did not abandon this part of their case, they seemed aware that the objection to title could not well be extended to all the pursuers, and were, therefore, inclined to join issue with the pursuers upon the merits of the case. To these, therefore, the attention of the Lord Ordinary has almost exclusively been directed, as discussed in the very long and able pleadings of the parties. The question at issue on the merits turns upon the terms and effect of the conveyance of 1829, under which the original congregation of Carnoustie settled the property and constitution of their chapel. It does not resolve merely into a general comparison of the doctrines of the United Original Seceders with those of the Free Church, with a view of ascertaining whether in matters important and fundamental these correspond or differ; for by the conveyance of 1829 a test is established by which the views of the original proprietors as to the importance of certain doctrines are clearly ascertained, and a rule laid down for the guidance of the Court in estimating the qualifications and title of individual religionists to hold the beneficial interest and enjoy the property of the Chapel of Carnoustie. To that test the attention of the Court must primarily be directed, as set out in the second finding of the prefixed interlocutor. The five questions there referred to are to be found in the Book No. 13 of Process, page 220, produced by the pursuers, and in the Book No. 29 of Process, page 194, produced by the defenders. They are questions which, by the testimony of the Synod of Original Seceders in 1827, were to be put only to ministers and elders at their ordination; whereas, by the conveyance of 1829, they are adopted as the test of membership of every individual in the congregation. On the first two questions little argument was raised at the bar; the discussion turned chiefly on the three last. The third question is as follows:—"Are you persuaded," &c. . . . In this question there is involved, in the strictest manner, the

doctrine of the divine and exclusive right of Presbytery, as being the only scriptural form of Church government, and, as such, sworn to in the National Covenant and Solemn League. The fourth question is this—"Do you own and acknowledge," &c. . . . In this question, the doctrine of the perpetual, or, as it has been termed, the descending obligation of the Covenant and the National League is expressly involved. The fifth question is this:—"Do you approve," &c. . . . By this question, a reference is made generally to the testimony of 1827, to which these questions are found subjoined, in Nos. 13 and 29. It will be proper, therefore, to take notice of certain portions of that testimony, in illustration of the peculiar doctrines involved in the third and fourth questions. The historical part of the testimony, after bringing down the narrative of events to the year 1580, continues as follows:—"These important steps of reformation," &c. (p. 17). The same view is expressed in an earlier part (the Introduction) of the testimony as follows:—"Many, when they hear," &c. (p. 5). In a subsequent part of the narrative, under the head of "The Second Reformation, and its extension to England and Ireland"—after referring to the struggles between Charles I. and his Parliament—the testimony proceeds thus:—"In those circumstances, Commissioners from the Parliament of England," &c. (p. 25). The settlement of the Scottish Church at the Revolution is stated (at p. 42) to have been accompanied with sinful defects, and (at p. 43) the proceedings of the Church to have been chargeable with unfaithfulness. In particular, "although in some acts of fasting," &c. . . . The Treaty of Union is thus mentioned:—"Our national guilt was increased," &c. . . . The historical part of the testimony contains a detailed statement of the origin and progress of the Original Secession, commenced by Ebenezer Erskine in 1733, and of the judicial testimony which was then exhibited by the Associate Presbytery, with the principle of which the framers of the testimony of 1827 completely identify themselves. The following passage relates to the Covenants:—"Another step taken," &c. (p. 59). In the doctrinal parts of the testimony the matter of the Covenants is treated at considerable length. The following passages occur:—"In opposition to those who deny the present seasonableness of public religious covenanting," &c. (p. 161.) The testimony of 1827 concludes with a reference to practical evils, and an address and exhortation founded on them. The third article is thus expressed:—"In the third place," &c. (p. 196). The Lord Ordinary is aware that much has been said and written of a controversial kind as to the nature and effect of the doctrines of the divine and exclusive right of Presbytery, and of the perpetual obligation of the Covenant. He thinks himself relieved in the present case from entering into that controversial matter. He takes these doctrines as he finds them as understood by the framers of the conveyance of 1829, and as expounded by the authors of the testimony of 1827. He thinks that what the former of these have declared to be important, the latter have made distinct and intelligible. In particular, he holds their doctrine as to the Covenants to involve these matters—that the original swearing of these Covenants had, upon general principles, power to bind, and that, in point of fact, they did bind, the whole nation to which they respectively belonged, to the belief and to the performances therein embraced. That these vows and obligations have descended upon their posterity, meaning thereby the present inhabitants of these lands, and each individual of them, That these vows bind the latter to believe and to maintain the doctrines referred to in the Covenant, and not only to maintain the Presbyterian form of Church government established in Scotland, but to do what in them lies to extend the same uniform system to England and Ireland, as being the only scriptural form permitted by the Lord Jesus Christ. That the Original Seceders of 1827 held a firm and earnest belief in those doctrines to be essential to the clerical character, may be inferred from that part of their 6th question to ministers and probationers, which abjures "a detestable indifference and neutrality in the foresaid covenanted cause." It is now necessary to advert to the doctrines of the Free Church in reference to these points. The questions appointed to be put at ordinations of probationers and settlement of ministers already ordained, as established by the Act of the Assembly of the Free Church, dated 1st June, 1846, embrace the following, being the only ones that seem to bear upon the doctrines in question. 4—"Are you persuaded," &c. . . . 5—"Do you believe," &c. . . . It appears to the Lord Ordinary that these questions are framed so as designedly to avoid the doctrine of the exclusive right of Presbytery to be divine and scriptural. The assertion of a particular form is avoided; and still more the assertion that

Presbytery is that only form. All that is asserted is, that a government of the Church has been appointed distinct from the civil government, and that the Presbyterian form is founded on Scripture, and agreeable thereto. To the Covenants no reference is made at all in these queries, and their perpetual obligation is completely ignored as an article of clerical profession. The difference of doctrine between the two churches is strongly betrayed by the different manner in which, in the first place, the Revolution settlement; and, secondly, the Treaty of Union, are referred to by each respectively. In the Free Church Act and Declaration of 31st May, 1851, whilst the Revolution settlement is declared not to have been in all respects satisfactory, no exception is taken to it, on account of its ignoring the divine right of Presbytery, or of its disrespect to the Covenants. Again, it has been seen that the United Original Seceders reckon the Treaty of Union among the national sins of the Scottish nation—as being a breach of the National League and Covenant, and an infringement of the divine and exclusive right of Presbytery. Very different is the reference to the Treaty of Union made by the Free Church in their authentic acts. In the celebrated claim, declaration, and protest referred to in the fifth question quoted above, the Treaty of Union is announced as the basis of the claims and the foundation of the protest of the Free Church. A solemn reference is repeatedly made to that treaty as that by which the constitution of this country is unalterably settled as that by which the Sovereign's supremacy is excluded in Scotland, as inconsistent with Presbytery, as that which embodied the Act of Security as a fundamental condition—as that which confirmed and secured the Act 1690, concerning patronage. And, finally, towards the conclusion of that celebrated document, the Treaty of Union was pleaded in name and behalf of the Free Church, and of the nation and people of Scotland, in support of the claim of right then solemnly made. Further, the subsequent solemn protest of 18th May, 1843, upon occasion of the first meeting of the Free Church Assembly, declares that the condition of submission in spiritual matters to the civil powers, which was the immediate cause of the Disruption, was “contrary to, and subversive of, the settlement of Church government, effected at the Revolution, and solemnly guaranteed by the Act of Security and Treaty of Union.” The Lord Ordinary has perused with attention the representation and appeal of the majority of the Synod of Original Dissenters, and the Deliverance of the General Assembly of the Free Church, by which the proposal of union on the one hand was made, and on the other accepted, together with the speeches which are reported to have been made at the sitting of the Free Assembly of 1st June, 1852. The leading feature of the former instrument seems to be the statement that the peculiar doctrines of the one body, although not judicially avowed by, are not hostile to those of the other; that although not identical they are not repugnant. This statement seems to imply a certain change of opinion, which had been arrived at subsequent to the passing of their overture by the Synod, and which changed to the remodelling of an important clause in the conditions of the union, as will appear from a comparison of the third and fifth finding of the prefixed interlocutor. The divine right of Presbyters is scarcely alluded to. The perpetual obligation of the Covenants is propounded in the appeal and representation as a national obligation, which Dr Duff of the Free Church assumes to mean not a personal one; an assumption which a foot note, apparently by the Editor of the *Original Secession Magazine*, explains as follows:—“The question about the precise nature of covenant obligation, and the line in which it runs, is one of a most delicate nature, which should be cautiously approached, which requires in dealing with it more than ordinary steadiness of eye and hand, to avoid error on the right hand, or on the left. It is of the utmost importance to maintain the nationality of covenant obligation, but Dr Duff's explanation, that only persons who enter into the Covenants are personally bound by them, is exceeding liable to be misapprehended, as if he held that the Covenants were binding, but their obligation bound no one. We have no doubt that all he meant was that the Covenants are binding on the nation, and that their obligation rests on individuals, not as a personal obligation for the fulfilment of which he is solely responsible, but is binding on him, as all social obligations are, only in his place and station in society.” By the deliverance of the Assembly of the Free Church, the Original Seceders are permitted to continue to hold their own views in subordination “to the discipline and government of the Church.” It is impossible to doubt that, by this union and incorporation, the peculiar doctrines of the Seceders are sunk in those of the Free Church. Henceforth their ministers and probationers must be admitted upon the Free Church formula;

and the Secession Testimony, so far as it is contained in the three last questions referred to as a test in the conveyance of the Carnoustie Chapel, entirely silenced and ignored. The Lord Ordinary shall not dwell upon the last (the fifth) of these questions, which, had it alone been referred to by the conveyance of 1829, might be held to have raised the more general question, which appears to have been raised in the two late cases which were pressed on the Lord Ordinary's attention by each side of the bar. In the Toberdonny case, before the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, the point at issue was thus stated by his lordship in his judgment:—"The great question, which was so much discussed at the bar, and the principal question in the case, is, whether the fact is charged in the information—namely, that the Rev. Mr Millar and Mr Nicholl have joined the Free Church of Scotland—is such an act as to disqualify them for being trustees of the Meeting-house of Toberdonny; or in other words, whether the doctrines of the Free Church are the same as those of the Original Seceding body; and, whether the union which took place between them in 1852 was upon the basis of common doctrine and principles of communion." In the case of Cooper and Others v. Burns and Others, decided by Lord Ardmillan, 20th December, 1856, the sixth finding of his lordship's interlocutor was this:—"Finds, 6th, That it has not been instructed that, in any essential point, the defenders have departed from the fundamental principles of the said body of Seceders: therefore, assolizies the defenders from the conclusion of the action, and decerns." The Lord Ordinary does not think that the present case presents for decision the same general point which was involved in these two cases, and in regard to which there appears to have been a different result arrived at by the two judges by whom these cases were decided. He has already alluded to the special terms of the conveyance of 1829, which must regulate the decision of the Court in this case. He thinks he is in a great measure relieved from considering the more difficult question, what is fundamental and what is unimportant, in the differences which exist between the doctrines of the United Original Seceders and those of the Free Church? The conveyance of 1829 itself throws so much light upon what was held by its framers to be important and distinctive in their religious sentiments, that the Lord Ordinary had held himself constrained to consider the more general question with the assistance and under the influence of that light. In conclusion, he need scarcely observe that he has not allowed any views that he may entertain as to the soundness of the controverted doctrines to influence his decision of the question involved in the case.—Fifteen words delete.

(Intld.) H. J. R.

[The quotations by Lord Benholme are not given by us at length, for want of room, but only the initial words of each passage quoted in the Note, and the pages of the *Testimony* (Sixth Edition) where these will be found.]

ECCLESIASTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

ORIGINAL SECESSION CHURCH, CASTLETON.

Orig, 27th November, 1857.

THE Perth and Aberdeen Presbytery of United Original Seceders met here this day, being constituted with prayer by the Rev. Thomas Manson, Perth, Moderator *pro tempore*; *sederunt* with him, Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie of Thurso, and Mr John Goupar, from the congregation of Thurso

This meeting of Presbytery being held at this place, in accordance with the appointment of Synod, for the purpose of receiving the Rev. John M'Beath, and the people adhering to him, into union with the Original Secession Church; and Mr M'Beath and his people being present, the questions of the Formula were first put to Mr M'Beath, which being answered, and Mr M'Beath having also declared his readiness to enter into the bond for renewing the Covenants on the first opportunity, and to subscribe the Formula, the Presbytery gave him the right hand of fellowship, and his name was added to the roll. The questions of the Formula were then put to Messrs Donald Miller and James M'Beath, ruling elders, and Alexander Leitch, deacon, who had been acting along with Mr M'Beath, and the people adhering to

him, from the commencement of their present appearance for the principles of the Reformed and Covenanted Church of Scotland; and the Session being constituted by appointment of the Presbytery, Mr Donald Miller was chosen as Presbytery Elder, and took his seat as a member of the court.

The Presbytery proceeded next to the admission of as many of Mr M'Beath's adherents as were prepared to become members of the Original Secession Church; and having answered the usual questions put to such, according to the principles and testimony of Original Seceders, including a promise of subjection to the Session which had been then constituted, they were received into communion. This part of the work was concluded with a brief encouraging address by the Moderator of Presbytery. As the Lord's Supper was about to be dispensed, Mr M'Beath and his session distributed tokens of admission to the table of the Lord to those who had given in their accession to the Secession Testimony and principles, which are no other than the principles of the Church of Scotland as professed and maintained by her during the First, and especially the Second, Reformation periods of her history.

This is a very valuable and important accession to the Original Secession Church, and the support of the great cause in behalf of which her ministers and people have been associated—the maintenance of the principles of the Covenanted Reformation—and for which our covenanting ancestors contended and endured so much during the twenty-eight years' bloody prelatic persecution. During the agitation which preceded the Disruption, Mr M'Beath and his people were led to examine the principles and history of the Reformed Church of Scotland; and, as many others did at the time, they expected that those who made such warm appeals to the Covenants, and the contests and sufferings of the Covenanters, while the struggle with the State and the Court of Session was proceeding, would, when they at length came out, have taken up their position on the hallowed platform of the Covenanted Reformation in all its breadth. But they were disappointed in this, which was by no means an unreasonable expectation, and the realisation of which would have been hailed by a greater number of the inhabitants of Scotland than the leaders of the Free Church imagined; and being disappointed, they were led, step by step, to see it to be their duty, as witnesses, to ascend to the identical position on which the First Seceders took their stand, and which Original Seceders continue to occupy. They have therefore acceded to their Testimony with intelligence and cordiality. They have not entered into communion with the Original Secession Church as a measure of expediency, or in the way of making or asking any compromise, but from regard to principle, and under the influence of an enlightened conscience.

There is among the people adhering to Mr M'Beath a warmth of religious affection, and a manifestation of this in practical godliness, which ought to excite others to emulation, and which it would be delightful to see extensively diffused over the Original Secession Church, and among Christians at large, and by which the Secession Church was characterised—as our fathers have told us—in the days of her youth.

They have erected a very neat and commodious place of worship. The church is indeed, in all respects, a model; and it was filled on all the days of the solemn occasion—Saturday and Monday, as well as the Fast-Day—with a most attentive audience, and it is said that on the Sabbath a number had to leave for want of room. A large part of Friday was spent in prayer by the elders and members of the congregation. The devotional exercises were conducted, we think, by six individuals in succession at that meeting, which was well attended also by adherents. On Saturday evening, also, a protracted prayer-meeting was held; and two hours after the public worship on Sabbath was concluded, the people in considerable numbers met

in the church for prayer, and did not separate till between one and two o'clock on Monday morning; and though the public work was not concluded on Monday till about four o'clock, another prayer meeting was held in the Church that evening; and we heard also that, in some cases, when a number met for refreshment during the interval, in the houses of christian brethren in the neighbourhood of the church, a part of the time was devoted to joint supplications, and many, we doubt not, found seasons of spiritual refreshing.

It should be stated also, that the members of the Thurso congregation gave the most cordial countenance to Mr M'Beath and his people on all the days of the solemnity—not only in waiting on the dispensations of public ordinances, but also in attending at, and taking part in, all the prayer meetings, though not a few had to travel several miles; and not a few of Mr M'Beath's congregation are many miles distant.

It was cause of great thankfulness that the weather greatly encouraged all this alacrity in waiting on the means of grace—each one of the days and nights being, in all respects, as favourable as could be desired; and this was the more striking, as it was by no means so favourable, either immediately before or after. Truly, the God whom we adore and trust, is He whom the wind, the sea, and all the elements obey.

In what took place and was witnessed in the congregation raised up in Olrig, as a witness for the Reformation cause, there is great reason to "thank God and take courage." He who has all influences at his disposal, and all hearts in his hand, has in this shown how easily he can multiply faithful witnesses to himself in our covenanted land, as he did in times of old. May it be the means of stirring us up to seek help from above, and to give glory to our God, by expecting not small but great things from His liberal hand, in answer to prayer, in fulfilment of promise, and for His own Name's sake.

DUNDEE CONGREGATION.

THE Young Men's Association for Mutual Improvement connected with this congregation held its fifth Anniversary Meeting on the 23d November. The meeting was held in Lamb's Temperance Saloon, Reform Street, and, as on former occasions, about the entire congregation, old and young, were present, besides a number of friends both from the town and the country.

The chair was occupied by the Rev. William Robertson, minister of the congregation, who opened the meeting with prayer. From the annual report of the proceedings of the Association, we learned that at present it consisted of twelve members; that it had met forty-six times during the year; that eighteen essays on religious and ecclesiastical subjects had been read, besides a considerable portion of the Westminster Standards and other important works. The funds of the Association have, as formerly, been devoted towards the extension of the congregational library. The following essays were then read to the meeting:—"On the Evidences of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures," by Mr James M'Kay; "On Voluntaryism, or the Duty of Nations to the Church of Christ," by Mr James Sands; both of which were highly appreciated by the audience, and were very creditable to the essayists.

The Rev. Mr Barr, of Coupar-Angus, who had been specially invited, delivered an eloquent and instructive speech on "Subjects of Study," in which he reviewed, in a most interesting manner, the leading questions of the day, both in the Church and in the world.

Several addresses were also delivered by members of the congregation—the chairman concluding; and, after again uniting in devotional exercises, the meeting broke up, apparently much gratified by the evening's proceedings, which occupied upwards of four hours.

ERRATUM.

Page 341, line 18th from bottom, for "camp," read "lamp."

THE
ORIGINAL SECESSION MAGAZINE.

MARCH, 1858.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. JOHN AITKEN,
LATE OF ABERDEEN.

COMMENCEMENT AND PROGRESS OF HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY.

ONE of the precious promises which God has given to His Church is, "I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. iii. 15). The fulfilment of this promise is one of the great blessings which the risen Saviour is exalted to bestow. Verily it is a great work of God to maintain a succession of godly, faithful office-bearers in His Church. It is only by some blessed measure of His Spirit and grace that any can be fitted for the right performance of the duties which those who occupy such a responsible station are called to discharge. We would be among the last to depreciate learning and talents: the former is a most valuable auxiliary to the public servants of Christ when wisely employed; and, without the latter, an important line of evidence is wanting that one has a call to public work in the Church. It is certainly meet that the servants of the living God, who are occupied in giving instruction to men in His name, should have some distinct knowledge of the two languages—Hebrew and Greek—which He, in His infinite wisdom, has seen fit to make the medium by which His character and counsels, His truth and laws, should be revealed to men; and also, that they should be endued with capacity for giving a clear exposition of the Divine Oracles, and a distinct exhibition of the truth which they contain, and of the duties there prescribed by the highest authority.

But there ought to be a deep conviction felt and cherished by the servants and people of God, and, in particular, by such as are in the course of preparation for the holy ministry, that no measure of natural talents, however great, and no degree of attainment in learning, however high, are sufficient of themselves to qualify any for the suitable discharge of the duties of the ministerial office. This is generally

admitted: it cannot well be denied by Christians; but it is very far from being duly felt in any one department of religious society. Hence it is that so much more pains are bestowed on the mere external and mental training of such as are expected to be the future pastors of the Church, and so much more care shown about their attainments in learning and philosophy—which, though valuable in their own place, are, at best, ever to be viewed as subordinate—than as to the means by which a vigorous, healthful, and fervent piety may be cherished and promoted in their hearts and souls. If we mistake not, this is one of the greatest dangers to which the visible Church is exposed at the present time. This is one of the reefs on which the Church has been often stranded, to her deep injury. She was so in our own land during the reign of Moderatism. She has been, and still is so, to a great extent, in Germany in our own times. Towards this she seems at the present time to be drifting, both in Britain and America, with the concurrence of nearly all parties concerned. And there is reason to think that this is not only a latent and leading cause of the decay of true religion, but also of the scarcity of ministers with which various sections of the Church are threatened, and from which some of them are already suffering. As the undue esteem in which the mere possession of wealth is held among worldly, and even among religious men, has exerted, and continues to exert, a very pernicious influence on society, of which we have at present so many mournful illustrations,—so the undue estimation in which the mere possession of learning and mental acquirement are held in the Church, we cannot doubt, has produced very baneful effects on a very important class of the rising youth in the great Christian community. We are not sure if there is so much as one now in public office in the Church who has not sustained more or less injury from this evil. The ambition which the prevailing taste of professedly religious society tends to foster—that of being held in esteem as great rather than good, and as learned rather than truly godly—is undoubtedly a carnal, worldly principle. It is as far from being any part of true religion as is the love of wealth or worldly honour. In proportion as this principle prevails, may we expect to see the minds of young men turned from the work of the ministry, except in as far as they have cause to expect that their worldly interests can be advanced by devoting themselves to this office. And undoubtedly the glory is departing from the gospel ministry, when respect to the glorious future recompense of reward ceases to have paramount influence with those to whom the oversight of souls is committed, or when the approbation of the Head of the Church, instead of occupying the place to which it has every claim, comes to sink into the shade, so that its felt power, as a motive to duty, is scarcely perceptible.

Almost all who are led in a right spirit to think of devoting themselves to the public service of the Lord Jesus in His Church, do this under the impulse of strong religious affections, produced and accompanied by the vivid conceptions and the deep impressions of the value and glory of divine and spiritual things which the Holy Spirit imparts to them. And surely of unspeakable importance to the welfare of the Church, that

this state of mind should not only be maintained, but increased and greatly intensified, as there is the best reason that it should be. Nor should any scriptural means be neglected by which an object may be promoted, in which the glory of God and the best interests of men are so deeply concerned. We have a strong persuasion that the Church which, while other qualifications are duly encouraged and diligently sought, shall set herself, with all earnestness, to employ every proper means of cherishing and promoting the power of godliness in the youth who are undergoing a course of training for the work of the ministry—which shall give this a prominent place at every stage of their progress, and make it manifest that, in the judgment of her courts and congregations, this is the main element of fitness for this high office,—shall, through the Divine blessing, soon reap the benefit of making this the united and persevering aim of all parties, and set an example calculated to have a blessed influence on the other Churches of Christ around her.

These thoughts have been suggested by the evidence we possess of the spirit of fervent piety in which the subject of this memoir commenced his public ministry, and which was so conspicuous throughout his whole life; and, confirmed by some little experience and observation, they are put on record here as one of the best opportunities which the writer may ever have of calling the attention of his brethren to a subject of transcendent interest, not only to our own denomination, but to the Church at large.

It is manifest, from the rapidity with which one call after another came out to Mr Aitken, from nearly all the vacant congregations connected with the Constitutional Presbytery that were in a condition to take such a step—all intensely earnest to obtain the youthful preacher for their pastor—that his labours in the commencement of his ministry were peculiarly acceptable. And when we see the humble, watchful, and prayerful, as well as public spirit, in which he began and prosecuted his ministry, we cannot wonder that he was so popular with those who were capable of estimating such worth, as we have reason to know the leading parties were in the different congregations at that time. While, in learning and talents, Mr Aitken ever occupied an honourable place among the best of his compeers, there can be no doubt that it was the elevation of his devotional spirit, and the high degree in which his own soul was imbued with the fear of God and with the love of the truth, as it is in Jesus, that was the secret of his remarkable acceptability as a preacher. It was his own habitual aim to walk with God, and please Him well in all things; and he was honoured to be the means of leading others into that blissful communion with God, in divine ordinances, which was so highly valued and earnestly sought by himself.

The great tenderness, in reference to the calls which he received, leading him to refrain from putting forth any active influence in determining which of the places whence these came should be the scene of his future labours, appears from the following statements as to this matter contained in his diary.

It may be proper to state that the diary, from which quotations are

so often taken, was written for his own personal use, in such characters as would have rendered these notes inaccessible to any other, were it not for a providential occurrence, of which he could have had no anticipation, by which one member of his family became qualified to decipher the writing. It was not written to be seen by any other, much less to be published. But this gives it additional value, as an index of character and an unvarnished record of facts.

"Previous to the settlement of the competition (the competing calls), I was aiming to cast myself on the Lord, that He would order my lot agreeably to His will; and I was determined that I would have no hand in ordering this, that, whatever might be the issue, I might have nothing to reflect on this head. By a very extraordinary providence,* it was ordered that I should go to Aberdeen."

Of the spirit in which he devoted himself to the work of the Lord in the city in which he was appointed to labour, and entered on his public ministry there, we have the following account:—

"On the 25th of July, 1811, I was solemnly set apart to the office of the holy ministry. Mr Chalmers, of Haddington, preached, and had great freedom and liberty in the works of the day; Mr M'Crie preached in the evening. I was very poorly in health that day; but the Lord carried me through, and, I hope, enabled me to give myself to the work of the ministry, however weak and unfit I am for it. What a comfort is it, that He can make use of weak instruments to advance His glory, as well as those that are more eminent! May I be enabled to be faithful, honest, and diligent in His service! This I would desire to have for my great aim.

"On the Sabbath after my ordination (July 28th), I was directed to lecture on the prayer of Moses, 'If thy presence go not,' &c.; and, in the afternoon, to preach on the words of the Apostle, 'We are ambassadors for Christ.' I thought I had something of the Lord's countenance.

"On Monday, the 29th, I kept a day of solemn humiliation and covenanting, when, for the first time, I wrote my acceptance of the method of salvation, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and my devotement of myself to God. What I had often before said and also sworn, I now committed to writing, and subscribed with my hand. O let me beware of resting on this in the smallest degree! Though I did it because I thought it my duty, and what might be of use to me, I desire to renounce everything like trusting to my own heart, or resting on anything except the finished righteousness of Immanuel. May I be enabled continually to walk as one who is bound by every tie to be the Lord's!"

The personal covenant which the very youthful minister wrote on this occasion, in the presence of the eternal God, in connection with fasting, humiliation, and much prayer, has been found among his papers; and as one of the best specimens of such interesting documents, which in the days of our fathers were not so rare in our land as we fear they are at the present time, we give it in full to our readers, and would do so with the prayer that it may be blessed to many, and be the means of stirring up others to copy the example set.

* The dispensation here referred to is not recorded; but, like all rightly exercised Christians, Mr Aitken was a careful observer of the dispensations of Providence, as appears in the notice taken in his diary of what would be reckoned by many a very ordinary incident. Being prevented in some way from visiting Kirriemuir, on a week fixed for that purpose, and finding afterwards that it was good that he did not get his purpose carried out, he states, "I now see the kindness of Providence in not leaving me to go to Kirriemuir. This day, on which I behaved to have come into town, has been a dreadful day of rain, by which I would very likely have been injured. I was ready, perhaps, to be a little fretful at first, and when the weather was better on Tuesday, and to wish I had gone. But I may learn from this never to be too much disappointed when deprived of anything, and to wait. I know not at first all that the Lord designs."

PERSONAL COVENANT.

"O infinitely great and glorious Jehovah, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, I do this day appear before thee, acknowledging myself to be a lost, ruined sinner in Adam, my federal head and representative, and that I have been chargeable with innumerable sins of heart and life, of omission and commission—yea, that my whole conduct, since ever I had a being in the world, has been a course of defection from thee. From the threatenings denounced in thy pure and holy law against transgressors, I am fully sensible that I am, on account of these sins, exposed to thy awful wrath; for this is its language, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.' I acknowledge that I deserve to fall under the execution of the curse in its full extent, and that thou wouldest be fully justified though thou shouldest utterly destroy me. This I would desire to be deeply sensible of; and farther, that I am utterly incapable to do anything for my deliverance out of this situation—yea, that no creature is able to help me. But forasmuch as thou, in thy astonishing love, resolved to save a company of Adam's ruined family, and from everlasting entered into a Covenant with thy Son on this head, promising deliverance from sin and wrath, and the possession of eternal glory in Him, on condition of His completely obeying thy law, and satisfying thy justice, in their room and stead; and whereas Christ, standing in the character of the second Adam, agreed thereto, and hath, in the fulness of time, actually appeared in our world, and by His holy nature, righteous life, and satisfactory death, in the most perfect manner gone through all that was required; and whereas thou art in thy Word exhibiting all this, and inviting me, a poor, guilty sinner, to come and take the benefit of what He hath done—to unite with Him by faith, to put in my claim to that salvation which He hath wrought out, to declare my liking to this method and plan, and my desire to be saved by Him alone saying, 'Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live.'

"On this as my warrant, I this day, on my knees before thee, the searcher of hearts, solemnly declare my acceptance of Christ with my whole heart and soul, and my perfect acquiescence in that glorious plan devised by Infinite Wisdom for the salvation of sinners. I hereby renounce every other method of salvation, and take hold of thy Covenant, by closing with Christ, the head of it, declaring my resolution to rest thereon for time and eternity. I take God the Father to be my Father, God the Son, in every character and office in which He is exhibited, as my Prophet, Priest, and King, to be taught, saved, and ruled by Him, and God the Holy Ghost to be my sanctifier and comforter. I take a three-one God, in Christ, for my God, and declare that 'the sure and well-ordered Covenant' is 'all my salvation and all my desire.'

"On the other hand, in obedience to thy command, and as a token of gratitude, I hereby give myself over to thee, in my soul and body, in all I have, am, or can do, to be employed in thy service, while thou sparest me in this world; and as thou hast been pleased to put me into the ministry, to do all in my power, constantly looking up for the assistance of thy Spirit, for promoting thy glory, and doing good to immortal souls.

"I am, with my whole heart, content (Lord, thou knowest!) to part with, and do renounce, every known sin, lust, or idol, and particularly the sin which doth most easily beset me, together with my own foolish will, and all other lords besides Christ, without reservation and without exception, against His cross. Protesting, in thy sight, O Lord, that I am (through grace) willing to have discovered unto me, and, upon discovery, to part with every sin in me that I know not; and that the doubtings and averseness of heart, mixed with this my accepting of thy Covenant,

are what I allow not; and that notwithstanding thereof, I look to be accepted of thee herein, in the Beloved, thine only Son and my Saviour, purging away therewith all my other sins by His precious blood.

"Let it be recorded in heaven, O Lord, and let whatever is here present bear witness, that I, though most unworthy, have this day been taken hold of, and come into thy Covenant of grace, offered and exhibited to me in thy Gospel; and that thou art my God in the tenor of that Covenant, and I am one of thy people, henceforth and for ever—hereby renewing in writing what I have formerly aimed at both in secret and in public.

"Signed in my closet, at Aberdeen, this twenty-ninth day of July, one thousand eight hundred and eleven years.

"JOHN AITKEN."

There is, in this manner of commencing his public ministry, much to excite our admiration, and to lead us to bless God for what men have been made by divine grace. There is not only fervent piety manifested, in great diligence in the use of the various means of communion with God, and in spirituality and humbleness of mind: there are also a remarkable maturity of judgment, a distinctness in his knowledge of evangelical truth, and a sense of the dangers with which he was beset, calling for habitual watchfulness, that show clearly how signally he had profited by the distinguished process of training which it was his high privilege to enjoy. And all this is enhanced by the consideration that Mr Aitken had not completed his twenty-second year when an example so worthy of imitation began to be set by him.

All who seek the Church's welfare, ought to be earnest in prayer to God, that He would raise up many such pastors to take the oversight of her congregations. Happy, indeed, the people whose privilege it is to enjoy the ministry of such! and how great must their responsibility be! May the Church's exalted Head and King imbue the youthful ministers of our own and other Churches with a large measure of the same spirit, and make their path, as He did that of this venerable father of the Original Secession, as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day!

The sequel of Mr Aitken's course, after this happy commencement, was altogether in harmony therewith. In him the religious affections were not like the transient impetuous rush of the mountain torrent, but the calm, steady flow of the river. There is proof of this furnished in a continuous record of exercises, from which we shall now adduce a few specimens, exhibiting, in various aspects, the kind of life which this servant of God made his habitual aim, and had it for his attainment to reach.

His internal exercise as a Christian demanded and received special attention throughout his whole public life. There is an inner life in every Christian, and in every Christian minister in particular, in walking with and before the invisible God, which is essential to spiritual prosperity; and it was the high privilege of the subject of this memoir to be distinguished by great care in cherishing this.

As an instance of Mr Aitken's great tenderness and circumspection, the following specimen is given, containing remarks regarding a kind

of mixed public entertainment, at which he was present. And this is given partly because there is not unfrequently similar cause of complaint, as to the manner in which soirees and assemblies, so fashionable at present, are conducted, in which the sacred and profane are commingled :—

"This evening I supped, by special invitation, with the magistrates and a large company in the Town-hall. As I did not wish to give offence, I went, though with some hesitation. In general there was decency, at least while I stayed, for I rose among the first, and was home before twelve o'clock. A number of good songs were sung ; but there was one that did more than border on obscenity. I was much surprised that this was allowed, considering that there were a number of the clergy present. I was also much disgusted having to sit beside a Mr C., who swore different times, so that I was obliged to reprove him. Upon the whole, I did not think it was profitable for me to attend such meetings, and at present I have no intention of returning on a similar occasion. I came away much affected with the wickedness of the world ; and pity for them if they know no better enjoyment !"

Mr Aitken's first discourse was preached from his father's pulpit, from the words, "The love of Christ constraineth us ;" and after stating this, he adds, "which was the exercise I was striving to be at." It was his aim, in the discharge of all duty, and especially in all public work, to act under the constraining influence of the love of Christ. Again, after recording some things concerning his public labours soon after his settlement in Aberdeen, we find him saying—

"I would wish that all my discourses may be what I myself firmly believe, and that my discourses may be of the most practical tendency. But I know that the assistance and agency of the Holy Ghost is absolutely requisite, in order to make anything that I may say, or the most eminent minister that ever was on earth, any way beneficial to an immortal soul. Though I have many difficulties, I have some, yea, many comforts, and for these I would be thankful, studying to believe His promises, 'My grace is sufficient,' &c., 'I have made, and I will bear.' The trial which I have at present, is the little life and freedom which I have in public prayer. O that I may discern the cause, and that it may be removed ! Lord, teach me to pray ! I would wish to be laid in the dust. The pride of my heart is strong. Lord, subdue it ; but let not thy name be dishonoured through my weakness and unworthiness !"

Mr Aitken noted down some parts of his exercises on sacramental occasions, of which we may give a few samples. Of his experience at the first Sacrament in his own congregation he says—

"I cannot say that I enjoyed such sensible communion as I think I have done before. . . . The thing I was desiring to seek at His table, and which I would desire to continue seeking, was, that if it was the Lord's will, I might be the honoured instrument of gathering in sinners to the Saviour. I would be unwilling (though I desire to have my will wholly swallowed up in His will in all things) to continue preaching, and no good be accomplished by it. If I get no positive evidence (of success), I would desire to rest on His promises, 'My presence shall go with thee,' and 'Fear not, for I am with thee,' in respect to all I may be called to meet with."

Of his experience some time after, when assisting his father at Kirriemuir in dispensing the Lord's Supper, he states—

"For a few days before, my mind was a good deal distressed and in darkness. I cannot say I had such doubts about my state, but as to how I could go forward to Christ's table, professing love to Him with a cold, lukewarm heart. I was, however, enabled to wait on Him ; and on Sabbath, while I sat at the table, I think I can say

I was enabled in some measure to love 'Him who first loved me.' I not only could not doubt about my interest in Him, but He was pleased to give me such a discovery of His love, that my heart 'burned within me.' O that I could praise Him, that ever He could fix His love on a worthless, sinful worm like me, and that He is pleased not altogether to hide the knowledge of this from me! 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.'"

In his record of experience on another sacramental solemnity, we find him saying—

"While at the table, I was trying to feed on that sweet language of the Apostle, applying it to myself—'the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me,'—a sweet word indeed! What a mercy is it that, on the ground of His own declaration, I am as much warranted to say it in faith as the Apostle was. The last petition as to myself was, that I might enjoy more fellowship with the Lord in secret prayer. It has been often my heavy burden and complaint that my heart has been so sadly wandering, cold, and inattentive, while professing on my knees to address the great God in secret. This is a sin which I would wish deeply to mourn over. It is not merely the gift, but the grace—the spirit of prayer, which I would have. I was aiming to plead that blessed promise, 'I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications.' Surely the happiness of the Christian must be in enjoying intercourse with heaven."

Mr Aitken was accustomed, at the commencement of every new year, to devote some time to a review of the past year, and to prayer for special objects. Of his recorded exercises on such occasions, we give the following:—

"January 14th, 1814.—This evening I set apart with intention of reviewing the events of the bygone year, with reference to myself, and engaging in religious exercises. Nothing remarkable has occurred in my outward circumstances. But on the one hand, I find that I have many things to be humbled for, and on the other, there are many things for which I ought to give God praise. As to the former, though I have been kept free of outward gross sins before the world, for which I would desire to be thankful to Him, who only can preserve from falling, I have much cause to be humbled for my lukewarmness and deadness in prayer, my backwardness to the exercise of meditation, my little zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls, my carnality of heart, and other sins which I cannot reckon up. As to the latter, my mercies are without number during the year that is now past. I have enjoyed, in general, good health: my dear parents also continue to enjoy some measure of health. I have enjoyed considerable countenance in the distribution of the bread of life to sinners and on sacramental occasions." After being employed for some time in these exercises, he adds, "I engaged in prayer for various things. 1st, For the Lord's presence and blessing to me through the year on which I have entered. 2d, For his countenance in dispensing ordinances, and that He would make me the happy instrument of winning souls to Jesus. 3d, For the revival of His work and interests in this land. And 4th, For His direction and special countenance in entering into a new relation. In this I have as yet done nothing; neither would I take a single step, without looking up to God for His direction. He hath said, 'In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths.' I would desire to leave all in the Lord's hand, who knows what is best. I would be kept from rashness in this matter—from setting my affections in too high a degree upon any creature, and from giving that love to another which is due to the Lord alone. Let Him do what seemeth Him good."

As to his exercise on another occasion, corresponding to the preceding, he states—

"I intended yesterday (the first day of the year) to have employed some time in extraordinary prayer and examining the state of my soul, but was obliged to delay till this day. . . . After breakfast, having retired, I endeavoured to place

myself, in thought, upon the brink of eternity, and inquire what comfort I would have were I to be called this day to give in my account. Taking some view of my heart and ways, I see myself to be a great sinner; and by the law, which is holy, just, and good, exposed to eternal wrath. I am convinced that nothing which I or any creature can do can help me, and have no other ground for hope but the free, gracious promise of salvation, through Christ. I endeavoured to look, in the exercise of faith, to several passages, chiefly to such as furnish the most comfortable and unlimited warrant to embrace and trust in the Lord Jesus for salvation." A number of these are then quoted, and it is added, "I saw especially a firm foundation for my soul to rest upon in Isaiah xxviii. 16, which occurred in my ordinary reading this morning—'Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone,' &c.; and no other foundation do I desire. Here God hath directed poor sinners like me to take up their standing for eternity, and on this I would rest. . . . When I reviewed some things of the Lord's kindness toward me during the past year and the past part of my life, I would desire to have my heart filled with gratitude and praise. 'Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto,' and done such things for me? 'O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant.' I have been aiming to supplicate the Lord's countenance that he would direct me in my studies, that religion may thrive more and more in my own soul and in my congregation, and throughout the Church."

There can be no doubt that such exercises as are recorded in these excerpts from the diary of Mr Aitken are very profitable, as a means of stirring up to duty and obtaining comfort. It is not easy to estimate the loss which those in public and private stations sustain by neglecting the duties of seeking to know their state and exercise before God, of observing carefully God's dealings with them in His outward dispensations and spiritual communications, and of setting seasons apart for prayer for special objects.

Mr Aitken was not only characterised by watchfulness over his own heart and life, and earnest to enjoy tokens of God's favour in dispensing divine ordinances: he was also diligent in his preparations, exercised judgment in the selection of subjects, and was earnest to have his mind richly stored with divine truth, that he might thus be better fitted for edifying his flock. As to this, we find him saying—

"I have hitherto been preaching on miscellaneous subjects, and I purpose beginning a series of doctrinal discourses. I have as yet comparatively little knowledge of theology. May this be a means of enlarging my mind and increasing my knowledge!"

His knowledge of theology at this time was evidently great for his years. But in his father he had a high standard of this before his mind, and a deep sense of his own comparative deficiency. And the more this is felt by any, the more certain and rapid may their growth be expected to be. As to this, we find him saying at another time—

"Having, in the kindness of God, finished a course of sermons on Romans v. 19, endeavouring to point out man's lost condition, and the only way of recovery, yesterday I entered on the consideration of Enoch walking with God—an important subject, which I know but little of; but it is what I would desire to know more about, and wish that all my people—yea, all who take the name of Christians—may be more acquainted with it. Herein consists the true happiness of an immortal soul. I likewise began yesterday to lecture on the Epistle to the Ephesians, along with the Gospel of Luke. It is a rich epistle; and if the Holy Spirit is pleased to shine upon it, I and my people shall get a feast."

The lively interest which Mr Aitken took in the spiritual condition

and eternal welfare of his people, appears very clearly in what he has set down copiously in his private record as to the character and exercise, especially of such as had been removed by death or subjected to trials. One or two instances may suffice as a specimen of this—

"August 18, 1813.—I have just come in from witnessing the interment of ———, one of the elders who was ordained in December last. He has been confined for nearly four months—was seized with palsy about five weeks ago, and expired on Sabbath, the 15th instant. I think it may be said a great one has fallen in Israel. He seemed to be a lively, thriving Christian, and one that was made meet for being a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light. He was a young man, of a very pleasant, cheerful natural temper, and was much regretted by all who knew him. During his last illness, he was much afflicted, and frequently unable to speak. He did not seem to enjoy those sensible comforts which are sometimes granted to the children of God. But on different occasions, he said to me that his mind was easy; and at one time, he mentioned that promise, as being very sweet to him, 'He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' He has left an only sister here to lament his death; but I have reason to think that she is acquainted with 'a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.'"

"It is comfortable to reflect that there is reason to hope well of all the persons belonging to the congregation who have died since I came to it. If my flock are removed to the house above, surely I have no cause to repine. Let it be my concern to be faithful to those who remain, knowing that in a little I must give in my account. O that I may be enabled to live constantly under the lively conviction, that I must shortly put off this tabernacle, and be *numbered with the dead!*"

"On the 16th September, ——— departed this life, after a very long and affecting illness. . . . I had frequent opportunities of conversing with him. He manifested much resignation, and expressed his firm reliance solely on the righteousness of the Redeemer. I trust he has gone to the land, the inhabitants of which shall never say, I am sick. Ever since I knew him, he appeared to be an upright, tender Christian; and one thing pretty clearly to be observed in him was, a deep concern about the state of his family."

In April, 1817, Mr Aitken had the satisfaction of seeing the duty of public religious covenanting engaged in by a number of his congregation, in the renovation of the Covenants. And as to this, we have the following record:—

"I would desire here, as in other ways, to express my gratitude to my Lord and Master, for His great kindness on the late solemn occasion. It was, I believe, a good time to many—a time of refreshing, from His presence. My fears were in a considerable degree disappointed with respect to the important work of renewing our public National Covenants. We were, I trust, aiming to go forward to it with much fervent prayer; and the Lord has heard. A goodly number, 56 persons, appeared to join in the solemn work, and I hope, as to the most part, it was really heart work with them. Mr Chalmers, of Haddington, preached, in the forenoon of the covenanting day, from 2 Chronicles xxx. 8, 'Yield yourselves unto the Lord.' He had much freedom in the delivery of his message, and was enabled to be very plain and faithful in it. After the usual exercise, I put up the confessional prayer, and administered the bond. In the prayer I had much liberty, particularly in the close of it. I was almost overcome, and I saw that a number of the people were affected in like manner. There was much apparent seriousness in the time of administering the bond. I would fain take it as a token for good, that the Lord has good things in store for the land and for us. In the evening, my father preached from these words (Psalm xvi. 2), 'O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord.' The words of His professing people at this time have been good. O that there were such an heart in them! On Saturday afternoon, Mr Chalmers preached from John xiii. 31, 'Now is the Son of man glorified,' and my father, in the evening, from 1 Peter ii. 7, 'To you who believe, He is precious.' The action text was John vi. 55, 'My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.' I cannot say that I had much comfort in delivering this sermon, though I was satisfied that the truths I was led to speak were solid

soul's food. Some, I heard, found them to be sweet to their taste, and fed with much delight—yea, should have been content to have dropped the tabernacle of the body to be immediately taken to the table above. I communicated at the second table; and while thinking of some things which were trying and perplexing to me, and endeavouring to commit them to the Lord, I thought I heard His voice in His Word addressing me, 'All things shall work together,' &c. In the evening, Mr Chalmers preached a most sweet sermon, from these words, 'We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him.' On Monday he began from the following words, 'Every one that hath this hope,' &c.; and my father concluded, from Hebrews xii. 4, 'Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin,' which were suitable discourses. The provision served up on the occasion was excellent food, and, I doubt not, a number of His poor saints were enabled to feed upon it. Some have hinted that their souls were abundantly satisfied, 'that He brought them into His banqueting-house, while His banner over them was love.' O that we could suitably render praise to Him, and walk worthy of His kindness! Alas! how soon does the world, and the things of it, take away my heart, and lead me from God! Lord, pardon my sin, and help me to cleave closer to thee!"

YOUTH, LIKE A FADING FLOWER.

PART II.

Job xiv. 2—"He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down."

THE flower is cut down. My dear young friends, those lovely flowers in which your hearts delighted, when you cut them down in their perfection of beauty and brilliant hues, are now not only useless and withered, but soon become offensive to the senses of sight and smelling. You bright field of clover which waved in the morning breeze, and on the flowers of which your eye delighted to rest, by evening are laid low by the unsparing hand of the mower: or you beheld some gay flower sporting in the breeze, but a wind has passed over it, and it is gone—its place is scarcely known: or some cherished plant, on which you bestowed especial care—watering, supporting, and protecting it—for a while seemed to reward your care, and promised to be all you could wish; but, in an evil hour, some noxious insect or some chilling night frost nipped the fair plant, so that you mourn over the departed flower.

Such is our life. How forcibly the Word of God sets forth the solemn truth that our life is passing away! Its uncertainty and shortness are described in such an impressive manner as never was equalled by any uninspired pen. "All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass."

The flower is sometimes cut down while yet in bud, so that we see many carried from the cradle to the grave. At other times, the lovely flower is snatched away when just beginning to open and to fill a parent's heart with joy; but, alas! nothing remains save the memory of the dear little one, and his winning words and loving smiles.

But when the flower has fully blown—when the hopes of life are high and bright—when the heart beats strongly with anticipations of

to-morrow, and this loved one has found such a place in the affections of friends, that he could not be absent without carrying along with him their earnest prayers and tenderest sympathies,—ah! what words can express the anguish that rends these fond hearts when this fair plant is cut down. But it may have been watered by the dews of the Holy Spirit's influence, and planted in the house of God by His grace, so as to bid fair for a life of usefulness to the Church,—being the pastor's hope, the delight of the aged or humble saint, and rejoicing the heart of the anxious Christian parent, who is now to reap his reward. The great Husbandman sees meet to transplant it to His heavenly kingdom, after having thus for a short season shed its fragrance on the Church below.

"Death rides on every passing breeze,
He lurks in every flower;
Each season has its own disease,
Its peril every hour.

Our eyes have seen the rosy light
Of youth's soft cheek decay,
And death descend, in sudden night,
On manhood's middle day."

We see that, as all flowers decay and are cut down, so must we all fall before the stroke of death. "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass." I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living. "It is appointed to men once to die, and after death the judgment." Let us not, therefore, think that we shall escape this universal destroyer. Seeing that "we know not what a day may bring forth," oh, seek now, while you are in the enjoyment of health and strength, to have a saving interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the blessings of His salvation! Come, then, to Christ before the flower is cut down. Surely it will be more glorifying to God if you give Him the best of your days, than if you were to bring the dregs of your existence or the refuse of it to Him. He might then justly say, "Because I have called, and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hands, and no man regarded; I will also laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh." You may never have another season for seeking Christ. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

"Why should I say, 'Tis yet too soon
To seek for heaven or think of death :'
A flower may fade before 'tis noon,
And I this day may lose my breath."

Many who have been as healthy, as strong, and as gay as you are, surrounded by as many loving friends and pleasant companions, have been in a moment cut down—snatched from your side, and are now in the cold and silent grave—a prey to corruption and the worms. You know not how soon you may be called to follow them. "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." You have no promise of to-morrow: on the contrary, you are told, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring

forth." "In the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up: in the evening it is cut down and withered." Then, if spared to riper years, you shall have cause to say, with gratitude, "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth!" and you shall not have to mourn at the last, in the depth of soul-agony, saying, "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me! I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly." But, having dedicated yourselves to the service of God, you shall be among those who, "planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God." You shall come to your grave like a shock of corn fully ripe, and be held in everlasting remembrance in heaven. Seek, my dear young friends, to know the blessedness of him who "walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and on His law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

"The flowers of life may bloom and fade;
But He, in whom I trust,
Though cold and in my grave-clothes laid,
Shall raise me from the dust."

Original Poetry.

THE INFANT'S DREAM.

Oh! cradle me on thy knee, mamma,
And sing me the holy strain
That soothed me last, as you fondly pressed
My glowing cheek to your soft white breast;
For I saw a scene, when I slumbered last,
That I fain would see again, mamma,
That I fain would see again.

And smile as you then did smile, mamma,
And weep as you then did weep;
Then fix on me thy glistening eye,
And gaze, and gaze till the tear be dry;
Then rock me gently, and sing and sigh,
Till you lull me fast asleep, mamma,
Till you lull me fast asleep;

For I dreamed a heavenly dream, mamma,
While slumbering on thy knee;
And I lived in a land where forms divine
In kingdoms of glory eternally shine,
And the world I would give, if the world were mine,
Again that land to see, mamma,
Again that land to see.

I fancied we roamed in a wood, mamma,
 And we rested us under a bough,
 When near us a butterfly flaunted in pride,
 And I chased it away through the forest wide ;
 But the night came on—I had lost my guide,
 And I knew not what to do, mamma,
 And I knew not what to do.

My heart grew sick with fear, mamma,
 And loudly I wept for thee ;
 But a white-robed maiden appeared in the air,
 And she flung back the curls of her golden hair,
 As she kissed me softly, ere I was aware,—
 Saying, "Come, pretty babe, with me," mamma,
 Saying, "Come, pretty babe, with me."

My tears and fears she quelled, mamma,
 And she led me far away :
 We entered the door of a dark, dark tomb,
 We passed through a long, long vault of gloom,
 Then opened our eyes in a land of bloom,
 And a sky of endless day, mamma,
 And a sky of endless day.

And heavenly forms were there, mamma,
 And lovely cherubs bright ;
 They smiled when they saw me ; but I was amazed,
 And, wondering, around me I gazed and gazed,
 While songs were heard, and sunny robes blazed,
 All glorious in the land of light, mamma,
 All glorious in the land of light.

But soon came a shining throng, mamma,
 Of white-winged babes to me ;
 Their eyes looked love, and their sweet lips smiled,
 For they marvelled to meet with an earth-born child ;
 And they gloried that I from the earth was exiled—
 Saying, "Here ever blessed shalt thou be, pretty babe,
 Oh! here ever blessed shalt thou be."

Then I mixed with the heavenly throng, mamma,
 With cherubim and seraphim fair ;
 And I saw, as I roam'd in the regions of peace,
 The spirits who had come from this world of distress,
 And theirs were the joys no tongue could express ;
 For they knew no sorrow there, mamma,
 For they knew no sorrow there.

Do you mind when sister Jane, mamma,
 Lay dead short time ago,
 And you gazed on the sad but lovely wreck,
 With a full flood of woe that you could not check,
 And your heart was so sore that you wished it would break ;
 But it lived, and you aye sobbed on, mamma,
 It lived and you aye sobbed on.

But oh! had you been with me, mamma,
 In the realms unknown to care,
 And seen what I saw, you ne'er had cried,
 Tho' they buried pretty Jane in the grave when she died ;
 For, shining with the blest, and adorned like a bride,
 My sister Jane was there, mamma,
 Sweet sister Jane was there.

Do you mind the silly old man, mamma,
 Who came late, late to our door,
 When the night was dark and the tempest loud—
 Oh! his heart was meek, but his soul was proud,
 And his ragged old mantle served for his shroud
 Ere the midnight watch was o'er, mamma,
 Ere the midnight watch was o'er ;

And think what a weight of woe, mamma,
 Made heavy each long-drawn sigh,
 As the good man sat on papa's old chair,
 While the rain dripp'd down from his thin grey hair,
 As fast as the big tear of speechless care
 Ran down from his glaring eye, mamma,
 Ran down from his glaring eye ;

And think what a heavenward look, mamma,
 Flashed through each trembling tear,
 As he told how he went to the baron's stronghold—
 Saying, "Oh! let me in, for the night is cold ;"
 But the rich man cried, "Go sleep on the wold,
 For we shield no beggars here, old man,
 We shield no beggars here."

Well, he was in glory too, mamma,
 As happy as the blest can be ;
 He needed no alms in the mansions of light,
 For he mixed with the patriarchs, clothed in white,
 And there was not a seraph had a crown more bright
 Or a costlier robe than he, mamma,
 Or a costlier robe than he.

Now, sing, for I fain would sleep, mamma,
 And dream as I dream'd before ;
 For sound was my slumber, and sweet was my rest,
 While my spirit in the kingdom of life was a guest ;
 And the heart that has throbb'd in the climes of the blest
 Can love this world no more, mamma,
 Can love this world no more.

HISLOP.

Fragments and Extracts.

"I HAVE a pleasing remembrance," says one, "of being one of a family group who, on arriving at their home in the country, after travelling some five or six miles from church on Sabbath evening, went each to a place of retirement for secret prayer before they took any refreshment." This is a sample of the practical godliness which characterised the early days of the Secession, and had been transmitted from the spirit which pervaded Scotland in the covenanting periods of her history.

Many professing Christians are aspiring to nothing more than a vague expectation that they shall be among the saved when their days on earth are ended, forgetting that there is a salvation in begun and progressive sanctification to be enjoyed, about the possession of which they should be earnest, and without which none have satisfactory evidence that it shall be well with them at last.

Time is uncertain ; but a day of grace is more uncertain, for it may cease ere time be gone.

A faith's view of heaven is desirable, and so is a faith's view of earth; and they are both obtained through the same medium—the light of divine testimonies: nor can we expect to enjoy the one without the other.

PRAYING ALWAYS.

The force and obligation of the reiterated divine injunctions, "Pray always—pray without ceasing," are habitually disregarded by many; and yet their conscience never smites them though they have not so much as one day in their lives made it their aim to live in accordance with them. This part of the law of God is made of none effect, by making the truth that we cannot be always formally engaged in this duty an excuse for our neglect of this part of the revealed will of God. There can be no doubt that higher, far higher degrees of attainment, in a kind of life in harmony with this precept, have been and may be reached by large supplies of the Spirit and grace of God than many, even of God's own children, think of aspiring to. Prayer can be profitably mixed with the discharge of other duties to an extent which exceeds the conceptions of those who have never seriously attempted to yield obedience to this command. Men possess a degree of capacity for carrying on more than one mental and even bodily operation at the same time, which shows that praying always is far more practicable than many are willing to admit. We see and hear at once; and the one exercise is so far from interfering with the other, that they mutually assist each other in not a few cases. We work with our hands, and walk and speak at the same time. In all these cases, there is a double exercise of mind going on—unconsciously, it may be, but really,—and yet no confusion or over-tasking of the mind. On the contrary, our happiness, or the measure of our enjoyment, is thus increased. And so, undoubtedly, would our mixing prayer with all we do greatly add to our comfort as Christians. It was David's privilege to set God always before him; and he no doubt habitually contemplated God in various aspects,—as his witness and his stay—as the object of his love and his Lord—as the source of his supplies, whence he needed to be ever receiving, and from whom he was not to think it strange to be ever asking. Were there more faith, there would be more prayer. Did Christians live more by faith, they would know more about praying always. The more any enjoy the Spirit, and walk with God, as Enoch did, the more will their acquaintance with praying always be increased.

If many despair of ever being able to live so as to pray always, surely none need despair of praying oftener than they do—of praying ten times for every once they now lift their souls to God in this duty. Do not our stated seasons for prayer also admit of being profitably multiplied? Let this be seriously essayed in a right spirit, and its advantages will be soon blissfully felt. The Lord our God does not desire the seed of Jacob to seek Him "always" in vain.

WAITING FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST.

The command and counsel of Jesus, the wisest and best friend of men, is, "Let your loins be girded, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto them that wait for their Lord." This is a call to aspire to living in a state of actual readiness for our departure out of this world. It is a call to aim at living habitually so that we will be prepared to hail and welcome the coming of the Son of man—having all our spiritual and temporal affairs in order for that important event. It is plainly the will of the Lord Jesus—His command and counsel to His people in these words—that they should live in constant expectation of His coming, ever realizing the truth that they know not what a day may bring forth, so that death shall never take them by surprise, however soon or suddenly it may overtake them. How many professing Christians are indeed striving to yield obedience to this divine injunction?

DELIGHT IN GOD.

It is a special part of Christian duty, enforced by the highest authority, to delight ourselves in God. This includes or supposes much. It is undeniably the reverse of indifference to God, or of alienation and estrangement from Him, and much more of aversion to Him. It includes admiration of God, confidence and interest in Him—looking to Him with complacency, and enjoying Him as a sweet source of blessedness. If our delight be in God, it will not be easy to keep us from thinking of Him, it will give us great pleasure to be near Him, and we will be forward to avail ourselves of all opportunities of holding fellowship with Him. Nothing but *insurmountable* obstacles will be able to keep us from embracing these.

DAVID'S LOGIC.

Lord, I find David making a syllogism in mood and figure; two propositions he perfected (Psalm lxvi.)

18. "If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:"

19. "But verily God hath heard me; He hath attended to the voice of my prayer."

Now, I expected that David would have concluded thus—

"Therefore I regard not wickedness in my heart." But, far otherwise, he concludes—

20. "Blessed be God, who hath not turned away my prayer, nor His mercy from me."

Thus David hath deceived, but not wronged me. I looked that he should have clapped the crown on his own, and he puts it on God's head. I will learn this excellent logic, for I like David's better than Aristotle's syllogisms, "That whatever the premises be, I make God's glory the conclusion."—*Dr Thomas Fuller*.

AGUR'S PRAYER.

"Lord," wise Agur made it his wish, "give me not poverty, lest I steal, and take the name of my God in vain." He saith not, "Lest I steal, and be caught in the manner, and then be stocked, or whipped, or branded, or forced to fourfold restitution, or put to any other shameful or painful punishment." But he saith, "Lest I steal, and take the name of my God in vain:" that is, lest professing to serve thee, I confute a good profession with a bad conversation. Thus thy children count sin to be the greatest smart in sin, as being more sensible of the wound they therein give to the glory of God, than of all the stripes that man may lay upon them for punishment."—*Ibid*.

"THE GROVES."

Hitherto—says the writer of *The Buried City of the East—Nineveh*,—we have had no information, which can be deemed satisfactory, respecting the object called, in our translation, the "grove" or "groves," which the Israelites are constantly accused of worshipping. Gesenius, perhaps the greatest critical authority that can be quoted, scouts the idea that "Ashurah," the original Greek word, means a grove. He translates it "fortune," or else leaves it untranslated. As a proper name, he identifies it with Ashtarte or Ashteroth, the wife of Baal,—anything, in short, but a grove. . . . The passages in the Bible referring to the worship of the groves equally prove that a group of trees is not referred to, but such an emblem or idol as this (the sacred tree, the representation of the goddess). In Judges, iii. 7, it is said, "The children of Israel forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves." Two coeval objects of worship, which could be worshipped in common, are thus presented. The same fact comes out yet more clearly from the following passage:—"The prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred,

which eat at Jezebel's table" (1 Kings, xviii. 19). In the next passage, the idea of an avenue of trees is grossly incongruous with the incidents with which the groves are associated—"They also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and *under every green tree*" (1 Kings, xiv. 23). It is further said, "They made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal" (2 Kings, xvii. 16). The account of Manasseh's proceedings, contained in the twenty-first chapter of the same book, is still more to our purpose. In the third verse, it is said, "He made a grove;" in the seventh verse, "And he set a graven *image of the grove* that he had made in the house"—i.e. in the temple of Solomon. Josiah afterwards cleared the house of this and other idols; and it is said that he brought out of the temple of the Lord all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven. If for the grove we substitute Ashurah, the passages become full of meaning, and we understand the allusion to the sacred vessels brought out by Josiah. In the sixth verse of the twenty-third chapter, it is said that Josiah fetched the grove itself out of the temple, burned it at the brook Kedron, stamped it small to powder, and scattered its dust to the winds—a series of actions in which the example of Moses, when destroying the golden calves, was closely followed. Isaiah says of an Israelite, "He shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect that which his fingers have made, either the groves, or the images" (xvii. 8)—language utterly without meaning, if considered as referring to a group or series of trees, but perfectly intelligible when employed of such a symbol as the present.

ACT FOR A DAY OF FASTING AND THANKSGIVING

BY THE

AYR PRESBYTERY OF UNITED ORIGINAL SECEDERS.

You are aware, Christian brethren, that a holy day is one requiring holy services; that the institution of holy days and holy services appertains to no creature, but is the prerogative of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious King and divine Head of the Church; and that, under the New Testament dispensation, no day is holy except the first day of the week, the Sabbath of the Lord. You are also aware that the office-bearers of the Church, met in the name of Christ, have authority from Him to require of the members of the Church the observance of all the ordinances prescribed in his Word, and, when circumstances demand it, to set apart seasons necessary for the observance of them.

Fasting and thanksgiving are parts of moral-natural worship. When observed in an evangelical manner, the former is a solemn protest against sin, and a special means of deliverance from the guilt and power of it, of averting wrath and judgment, and of obtaining mercies from the God of heaven; and the latter is a becoming expression of our unworthiness, and of the Divine goodness towards us, amounting to an earnest request for the continuance of His favours and the bestowal of new mercies.

The Presbytery feel that the Lord, both by His Word and provi-

dence, is presently calling us, and the inhabitants of those lands, to these duties. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is His faithfulness." As reasons for fasting and prayer, we submit to your serious consideration some of the most prominent manifestations and procuring causes of the Divine displeasure against the present generation.

Spiritual judgments are more dangerous, and more to be dreaded and deplored, than any outward and temporal calamities. The latter are not always judgments; for they are sometimes sent as trials of the faith and patience of the godly, when they are able in truth to make this solemn appeal to the searcher of hearts—"All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way; though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death." Even when temporal evils befall a sinning people, or are sent in judgment, they affect only the sensational part of the nature of man—thus producing deprivation of happiness and experience of misery; but spiritual judgments are a stroke on the moral part of his nature, strengthening the depravity of the heart, increasing the power of spiritual death, riveting the fetters of sin, subjecting a man more fully to the dominion of Satan, and endangering his eternal welfare. Self-righteous formalism in the service of God—insensibility and impenitency under the preaching of the gospel—attendance in the house of God to receive an intellectual entertainment from the gifts and abilities of the minister, rather than a spiritual feast on the love of God and the grace and salvation of Christ—to have the natural affections excited by sentimental emotions, rather than to experience the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, and to gratify the eye and the ear with outward adorning, imposing ceremonies, and the charms of oratory and music, rather than to worship the living God in spirit and in truth—worldly conversation on the Lord's day, and conference on the parts and learning of some so-called clever man, instead of speaking of the word of life, and things pertaining to the kingdom of God—the total neglect and contempt of the means of grace—the heathenism and the infidelity on the part of multitudes in our land—the false doctrines taught from many pulpits, and the atheistical, profane, and immoral publications issuing from the press—the doctrinal errors and schismatical divisions abounding in the Church, and at the same time lightly thought of and set at nought by their abettors,—all these works of the flesh, and others of a similar kind, are lamentable evidences of the restraint and withdrawal of the spirit of grace, and of the presence and power of the wicked one. The Lord has in a fearful manner given a commission to His own servants, "Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not, and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed." He has also put a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets; He has

given to many the spirit of slumber and deep sleep, and sent them strong delusions to believe a lie, because they hold the truth in unrighteousness, or received not the truth in the love of it, that they might be saved. Nor have temporal judgments lingered. With His own finger, the Lord has for many years blighted and destroyed a valuable and useful part of the produce of the field. He has frequently caused His terror in the land of the living, by smiting our towns and villages with the pestilence which walketh in darkness. While we were lately confederate with Papal France, to uphold the Turkish Mahometan Empire, He caught us in His snare and our own, and humbled our national pride by the almost unparalleled sufferings of our brave soldiers, during the rigours of winter, before the walls of Sebastopol, by saturating the soil with their blood, and filling the trenches of the Crimea with their dead bodies. Scarcely was that calamitous war brought to a dishonourable termination, when we are suddenly summoned by the Lord of hosts to maintain our own empire in India, whose very existence has been endangered by the mutiny and revolt of native soldiers of our own army. By the shaking of His hand upon us, we are now a spoil to our servants. Atrocious cruelties and outrages, too horrible to be uttered, are perpetrated by Mahometans and Hindoos on our officers and men, their wives and their children, in violation of faith solemnly pledged to their helpless and confiding victims, by their treacherous adversaries. Almost no respect has been shown, no mercy extended, no indignity disallowed to rank, age, or sex. Under the whole heaven there has not been done in our days, or in the days of our fathers, as has been done in India, to the sons and daughters of Britain. Since "the Most High does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men without cause," surely it becomes us seriously and reverently to ask, "What meaneth the heat of this great anger," by inquiring into the procuring causes of these sore judgments.

Our personal sins demand our first and serious consideration. But without a true sense of our original guilt, as having sinned in Adam, our representative and covenant head, the depravity of our nature, and even all our actual sins, will appear to us only as infirmities and frailties, incident to the nature of man, and excusable as an hereditary disease. With shame and sorrow of heart for that great offence of the human race, and for all the actual sins which proceed from it, our confession ought to be, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." If we are yet in an unconverted state, "every imagination of the thoughts of our heart is evil from our youth, and only evil continually;" and therefore, though we may be free from open and gross sins, our whole life has been one uninterrupted course of relentless enmity and unmitigated rebellion against the Lord. Even if we have undergone a gracious change, by being made the subjects of regenerating grace, sin indeed has been subdued, so that it no longer reigns; but it still retains much power in us, and manifests itself in a great variety of forms, as by unbelief hindering us from making full use of Christ in all His offices, and often producing in us unworthy, distrustful, and hard thoughts of God—self-righteous confidence in ourselves, and reliance on an arm of flesh—neglecting of the Word of

God—remissness in prayer—deadness, restraint, and formality in His service—immoderate love of the world and the things of it—inordinate love of self—deficiency of love to God, His people, and our neighbour—idle and sinful words, especially on the Lord's day—and unsteadfastness in performing our vows, holding fast the profession of the faith, and walking with God.

Many in our land are enemies to the strictness of a scriptural profession of the name of Christ. Not a few, who make a scriptural profession, do so to please men, or to serve their worldly interests: it is therefore not to be wondered at that they act inconsistently with it, and are ready to let it go rather than suffer inconvenience by maintaining it. Many embrace a profession which is less scriptural, because it admits of more conformity to the world, and allows greater scope to the desires of the flesh and of the mind. Professors of the religion of Christ are to be found in all denominations, at the present day, who cannot be distinguished, by their walk and conversation, from the world, and follow pleasures and amusements which have a tendency to dissipate the mind, waste the time, pervert the feelings, vitiate the morals, and divert the thoughts from all serious consideration about religion. Some make a public profession of their Christianity only once or twice in the year, when they receive the Sacraments. Multitudes who have been baptized in the name of Christ, had a religious education, and been at the Lord's table, have now practically renounced their baptism, cast off all restraints of conscience, and become worse than the heathen in irreligious profanity and licentiousness of speech and manners. Others, who have not yet altogether thrown aside the forms of religion, profane the Sabbath of the Lord by finding their own pleasure, speaking their own words, and doing their own actions on His holy day—take His name in vain in their ordinary discourse, and indulge in drunkenness and other gross immoralities. Drunkenness, in particular, we would acknowledge and deplore, as being an evil of monstrous magnitude in our land, highly offensive and dishonouring to God, and the fruitful parent of much demoralization and crime. Instead of ascribing the fearful prevalence of this sin in Scotland, as some infidels do, to the absence of amusements and recreations for the people on the Lord's day, may it not rather be traced, as the Word of God indicates, to the abuse of gospel privileges, to Sabbath profanation, and the fatal attempts of those who are sinning against the light, to stupify the intellect, and overwhelm the voice of conscience by strong drink? “The crown of pride—the drunkards of Ephraim shall be trodden under foot: they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.”

Our personal transgressions are greatly aggravated by the gospel light and privileges we enjoy, and our being partakers of the sins of others by causing them to sin, and learning of them their ways, or at least in not caring for their souls, and neglecting to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. As the countless drops of rain from the clouds mingle when they reach the earth, and contribute to the swelling and overflowing of waters in torrents and rivers, so do the sins of individuals fill up the measure of the iniquity of a land; and as a stone

thrown into a lake, or, one might say, the ocean, produces a ripple on the water, which forms itself into a circle, enlarging itself until it reaches the shore, so the baneful influence of one sinful action done by any member of the community extends over the whole surface of society, and even to the utmost bounds of the intelligent universe. By every sin, a portion of due obedience is abstracted or withheld from the public treasury of righteousness, and thereby an offence is committed against the supreme Lawgiver, a loss sustained by all His subjects, and a positive injury done both to the loyal and the disloyal.

Next in order are the sins of families. The Lord takes notice of these as well as those of individuals, and is highly displeased with them. "Seest thou what they do in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger." In the family, individual character is formed. In it are reared the future rulers and subjects of the State, and office-bearers and members of the Church. There are many families in our land who do not know the Lord, and do not acknowledge and glorify Him at all. These are conjoined with the heathen. "Pour out thy fury on the heathen that know thee not, and on the families that call not on thy name." Many heads of families, who attend on the public worship of God on the Sabbath, and receive the seals of His covenant, never worship Him in their own houses, in their private and social capacity; or, at most, content themselves with having the form of family worship only on the Lord's day. Contrary to their profession and vows, many parents neglect the religious instruction of their children, and devolve this duty on Sabbath-school teachers. Some do not even restrain their children from sin, and temptations to it, such as sinful amusements and sinful companions, but allow them to walk to a great extent after the imagination of their own hearts. The consequences are, that the blessing which has not been sought, does not come upon their children: they soon begin to cast off parental authority, and grow up regardless of God and His law, and their own baptismal engagements. Husbands and wives, in very many instances, endeavour but little to promote each other's and their children's spiritual welfare by mutual prayer, edifying conversation, and example. Thanksgiving for family mercies, and fasting for the sins of families, on seasons set apart for these exercises, are duties almost unknown. The relation and intercourse between masters and servants are still more devoid of religion; the one thinking it no part of his duty to care for the soul of the other, or to promote the honour of Christ in their civil stations.

Add to these the sins of the Church. The charge which the Lord brought against His Church of old, and the complaint which He uttered by the prophet Jeremiah, are applicable to His Church in our day—"For of old time I have broken thy yoke and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill, and under every green tree, thou wanderest, playing the harlot. Yet I planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed; how then art thou turned into

the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" Most of the churches in Britain and Ireland have long ceased to acknowledge the obligation of the Solemn League and Covenant, either on themselves or on the three kingdoms, and have lost sight of the object of it; to aim at the nearest conjunctions and uniformity in doctrine, worship, and ecclesiastical government, according to the Word of God and example of the best reformed churches. In opposition to the oath of this covenant, the hierarchy or lordly prelacy has long been predominant in the Established Churches of England and Ireland, and in them the worship and ordinances of God have been corrupted by superstitious forms and uninstituted ceremonies. Though the Lord wrought a great deliverance for His Church from Popery and persecution, at the Revolution of 1688, yet his house in Scotland was not rebuilt according to the former scriptural pattern exemplified at the Second Reformation. Instead of using with fidelity, and employing to the best advantage, the legal countenance given to it by the State, the Church of Scotland lost in an alarming degree its purity of doctrine—the due exercise of scriptural government, and of faithful discipline against the erroneous and scandalous—and has never to this day regained them: it has also succumbed to the grievous yoke of patronage, and various other acts of an Erastian supremacy, dishonouring to the King and Head of the Church, and injurious to the rights and privileges He has conferred on His people, and on the office-bearers and courts of His house. The defections and corruptions which adhere both to the constitution and administration of the Established Churches, the ready admission to religious privileges which persons of almost every character find in them, the evils they shelter, and the bars they have laid in the way of farther reformation, have depreciated their value, and given occasion to many to condemn every national establishment of the true religion, and to deny altogether the exercise of civil authority in behalf of religion and reformation. Hence it is, that most of the religious denominations which have at different periods separated from the communion of the Established Church, are following divisive courses from the Covenanted Reformation, and abandoning a faithful testimony for the Reformation principles and attainments of the Church of Scotland, which have been transmitted to us from our suffering ancestors. In most of the Dissenting Churches in the three kingdoms, Presbyterian Church government has been displaced from the high position which it has in the Word of God, and once occupied in the Solemn League, the Westminster Formulary, and the Reformed and persecuted Church of Scotland. Of late years, some of them, once renowned for evangelical doctrine, have received another gospel in the form of Armenian and Mormonian errors; and latitudinarian tenets and practices, in reference to Church communion, have become more and more prevalent among almost all denominations.

The greater part of the members of the Church have their hearts and hands so engrossed in the affairs of the world that their spiritual interests are neglected, and the duties of religion encroached upon or excluded. Attendance on the Word and the worship of God in public assemblies on working days is become less frequent, and accounted a

burden: even those days on which public worship has been observed as often as the sacramental communion has recurred, according to a commendable custom of the Church of Scotland, are now by many, even of the more religious class, reckoned unnecessary, and the services required as ungrateful sacrifices—perhaps as superstitious, and a being *religious overmuch*.

Even with us, and others long distinguished by a witnessing profession, there are to be found heinous sins against the Lord our God. Under the name of being alive, there has been a great deadness. That profession has been too often adopted on trust from regard to man, and not followed from knowledge and love of the truth. On this many have been disposed to value themselves above others; while they have not been careful to adorn it with greater holiness of life, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Ordinances enjoyed in abundance, and in a great measure of purity, have been carelessly attended and not duly improved. The Divine presence has not been earnestly sought in them, and it has accordingly been withheld; and the influences of the Spirit have been sadly restrained from them, so that they have not been accompanied with that power, success, and comfort which they once had. The first fervour of love and faithfulness which appeared in the beginning of the Secession, and which revived at the union of the Constitutional Presbytery with the Associate Synod—that spirituality, tenderness, watchfulness, and mutual affection which we have heard of, and some of us have known—have greatly decayed. Fellowship meetings amongst us are but few: the attendance on these is small and irregular; and when the present exigency of the Church demands their being held on the Sabbath, many, rather than wait upon them, will have sermon at the expense of consistency in maintaining their scriptural profession. A serious impression of vows, made by ministers or Christians, has not been habitually maintained on the heart; and no wonder though they have failed to perform them, and at last have been left to doubt, to cavil, and dispute about the nature and contents of them, instead of fully paying them to the Most High. The acknowledgment of the obligation of our National Covenants on the churches and kingdoms of Britain and Ireland, and a testimony against the violation of them, are distinguishing parts of our profession; yet the loud calls of Providence to the renovation of them, in a bond suited to our circumstances, have not been duly responded to, nor have the laudable practice of our ancestors, and the example lately set by the Synod in essaying this duty, been cordially and zealously followed and imitated by the present generation of Seceders. “Who is on the Lord’s side, who?”

Last in order are our national sins. On these we cannot dwell. Hear what the Lord said of all ranks in the nation of the Jews, and consider if the language be not applicable to us—“Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish; for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God. I will get me to the great men, and will speak unto them, for they have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their God; but these have altogether

broken the yoke, and burst the bonds." Those sins are accounted national by the Lord which are done by the great body of the people, or abound among all ranks of persons in the land. The neglect and abuse of the gospel of the grace of God is one of our national sins, and the greatest with which a people can be chargeable. The vast majority in the land are either sunk in infidelity, or make only a nominal or a false profession of religion; for by their fruits men are known. Those sins are national which are open and gross breaches of the divine law, and which civil rulers do not punish and restrain. Such are the open idolatry of the Church of Rome—the blasphemy, profane swearing, Sabbath breaking, drunkenness, and whoredom, with which our land is defiled, and which are seldom, if ever, punished in our day as civil crimes, ruinous to the welfare of the community. Again, those sins are national which are committed by the rulers, with the consent or concurrence of the great body of the people. The crucifixion of Christ was thus a national sin to the Jews; so also the persecution of the Covenanters—the burning of our National Covenants—our refusing to acknowledge their continued obligation—the admission of Papists into places of power and trust—the countenance and support given to Popery and Prelacy in Britain, Ireland, and the Colonies—and the continuance and enforcement of the law of patronage—are among our national sins. Belonging to the same class are the deference paid to caste and Hindoo idolatry in India, and the forcing of a poisonous drug on China, in opposition to the fiscal regulations of that empire. May not the Lord justly say to us, on account of these sins, "Shall I not visit for these things: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

Amid these evidences and grounds of the Lord's displeasure, the insensibility, hardness, and impenitence of the present generation are very alarming indications. Though the Lord has been sending one stroke of judgment after another, which of our national sins have we repented of and abandoned? What national or dissenting church has reformed, and returned to the scriptural standard of purity and the covenanted principles of the Second Reformation? Has there been a general revival of family and personal religion? Has the fear of the Lord fallen on the inhabitants of the land, so that we have turned every one from his evil ways? Judicial blindness has befallen us, as if the Lord were giving us over to the lusts of our own hearts, and were about to punish us yet seven times more for our iniquities. We have reason to be afraid, lest we be again and again taken in the snare which we have laid for ourselves. It was so in the Crimea—it is so in India, where the leaders of the revolt and mutiny were trained to arms in our own service. May not the same thing soon happen in our own country, when a more dangerous enemy than the Sepoys is annually nurtured in Maynooth, at the national expense, to go forth in troops to disseminate Popery and sedition over the land, and when Roman Catholics form a large part of our population and our army?

His judgments, however, have been hitherto mingled with mercy. He has punished us less than our iniquities deserve—He has smitten us, and removed the stroke—He has repeatedly smitten us, but He has

always been speaking to us by His word of grace—He has scourged us with the sword, and is doing so now; but it is at a distance, and He has not made our country the seat of war—He is still continuing with us His gospel, His Sabbath, and His ordinances—He is plenteously loading us with temporal benefits, by prospering our commerce and manufactures, and sending us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons—He has this year also granted to us an abundant harvest, and an almost uninterrupted and unprecedented course of favourable weather for the ingathering of the produce of the field. These are confirmations of His word, that he has no pleasure at all in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his ways and live—that He has no delight in the misery of His creatures, or in inflicting the curse for its own sake—that He never would execute it did not His holiness, justice, and truth, demand the infliction of it on impenitent sinners; and that in Christ Jesus he waits to be gracious, delights to remove the curse from sinners, and confer the blessing on all who believe and repent. Since these things are so with Him—since He also spares families, churches, cities, and nations, for the sake of a few godly persons in them, and remembers, for posterity, the covenants of ancestors; when even a small remnant confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, are truly humbled before Him, and accept of the punishment of their sin; and since they who cannot prevail by prayer and fasting, as intercessors to work any deliverance for others, shall at least deliver their own souls, what great encouragement have we to confess and forsake our sins—to pray for the outpouring of His Spirit on the inhabitants of these lands, to lead them to faith in Christ and true repentance for sin—that there may be a general turning to the Lord, a revival of personal and family religion, and a religious and scriptural reformation, both in Church and State; also to plead that the present course of judgment may be arrested, and return to righteousness: in particular, that peace, accompanied with the gospel, may be restored to India, that Satan's kingdom there, and throughout the world, may be overthrown, and that the way may be prepared for the universal reign of Christ over the millennial Church of Jews and Gentiles, and over the ransomed nations who walk in the light of it. Let special intercession be made by us for detached and surviving portions of the Reformed and Covenanted Church of Scotland, and for all its friends in other denominations, that the Lord may speedily gather them into one, by giving unto them one heart and one way, that they may fear Him, for the good of them, and of their children after them; also for the Church to which we belong, that He may bless her supreme and inferior courts, her congregations, families, members, and adherents—him who has the training of young men for the office of the ministry, and the individuals looking forward to it; incline the hearts of others to desire this good work—pour upon us the Spirit of grace and supplication—return to us with mercies—remove the grounds of His displeasure, and restore comfortable fellowship among brethren, in so far as it has been interrupted.

It is needful withal to remind you, brethren, that gratitude for mercies must be conjoined with confession of sin, and that praise is in

some respects more excellent than supplication. He that offereth praise, glorifieth God. Prayer savours of self and of earth, praise is disinterested and heavenly. Let us abound in thanksgiving for temporal and spiritual blessings, enhanced by our ill desert, and His grace towards us in Christ Jesus. In returning thanks for His goodness in the harvest, let one and all say in their hearts, "Let us now fear the Lord our God, who giveth us the former and latter rain, and reserveth to us the appointed weeks of the harvest." "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

Wherefore, the Presbytery appoint that Wednesday, the 2d day of December next, or such other day as may be more suitable, be accordingly observed as a day of Fasting and Thanksgiving in the particular Congregations, settled and vacant, under their inspection, and that this Act be publicly read to them on the preceding Sabbath.

DR LIVINGSTON'S RESEARCHES IN AFRICA.*

THIS is no ordinary book; nor are its facts and sentiments the records of an ordinary traveller. The researches of Dr Livingston in South Africa are destined to mark a new epoch in the world's progress. The record of these researches has already found a distinguished place in the archives of literature. The traveller is in fact himself a study, worthy of the attention of the most gifted and the most pious youths of the rising generation. While his book is the tribute of a grateful heart to the God of redemption, it is fraught with sentiments of adoration to the God of creation and providence. He travels with a sense of Deity upon his spirit, so that every object and every creature are recognized in relation to their Divine Author.

It is thus that, while he is a missionary of the noblest type, he is at the same time a geographer, geologist, naturalist, politician, and historian of a distinguished order. With the eye of the Christian, he scans the hitherto unexplored regions of that land of moral darkness; while to his enlightened understanding, every new object is an additional testimony to the wisdom, power, and goodness of God.

Had he described only the moral condition of the tribes whom he visited, he might indeed have presented a picture of human degradation, to which the heart of Christendom might have responded in feelings of sympathy and compassion; but his aim is more comprehensive, and he has obtained his object. His comprehensive mind has grasped the physical, social, moral, and religious relations of humanity, under African development; and in regard to these he desires to enlist the sympathies of the civilized world. Nor has he rested satisfied with this alone. He has viewed Africa in relation to the whole question of slavery, and has, we think, solved the social problem by which it

* *Missionary Researches and Travels in South Africa, &c.* By David Livingston, LL.D., D.C.L. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street.

may be totally destroyed. It is thus that his conceptions embrace the existing state and prospective elevation of humanity. He contemplates man as man, irrespective of the colour of his skin and the conventional maxims of social life; consequently his sympathies are intensified towards the most degraded of the race, while his keenest indignation is excited against the civilized perpetrator of injustice and wrong. It is thus that the record of his researches is calculated to issue in a new epoch in the history and destinies of Africa, while tending at the same time to rectify the social evils of other mighty kingdoms. How mysterious the providence of God! In India, nothing less than the bloodiest of rebellions could awaken the attention of the civilized world to its wrongs, while the same work is being effected in Africa by the peaceful labours of the unaided missionary, who has explored its hitherto unknown regions, and has opened up intercourse with its benighted tribes, without once shedding the blood of a fellow-man. Yea, so deep is the interest, that even during the period when the Indian Mutiny abroad, and the commercial crisis at home, are absorbing every thought, this wonderful book of Dr Livingston's has in a few weeks reached the unparalleled sale of 30,000 copies.

In the researches of Dr Livingston there is a combination of intelligence fitted to concentrate the sympathy of all classes. The geographer finds new scope for his labours—the geologist new data for the solution of his problems—the naturalist a wider range for his classifications—the politician a solution of grave social questions—the merchant a new sphere for legitimate trading—the agriculturist a propitious soil for the raising of tropical produce, and Christendom a new territory of moral darkness to be evangelized and added to the kingdom of our Lord.

The concentration of all these parties and interests is no ordinary event. We cannot repress the idea, while reading Dr Livingston's work, that the set time to favour Africa has at length come. The missionary, his researches, and the position he now occupies, closely disclose the gracious hand of God, and point the churches of Christendom to the land of Ham as the field of missions. Already is the voice of its sable sons heard throughout Europe and America uttering the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us."

To present extracts of such a work would be a delightful task; but isolated extracts can give no adequate idea of the interest it is calculated to awaken, or the information which it is fitted to impart, when read as a whole.

The providential training through which Dr Livingston passed is peculiarly interesting as a study for the young, while it marks him as the instrument prepared to accomplish a great work. He revered his parents with the most filial regard; while no expansion of knowledge nor elevation of circumstances has tended in the slightest degree to weaken the affection of early life. Of his father he thus writes, "I revere his memory;" while of his mother he draws a portrait worthy of the example of every faithful matron.

"The earliest recollection of my mother recalls a picture so often seen among the Scottish poor, that of the anxious housewife striving to make both ends meet. At

the age of ten, I was put into the factory as a 'piecer,' to aid, by my earnings, in lessening her anxiety. With part of my first week's wages I purchased Ruddiman's *Rudiments of Latin*, and pursued the study of that language for many years afterwards, with unabated vigour, at an evening school, which met between the hours of eight and ten. The dictionary part of my labours was followed up till twelve o'clock, or later, if my mother did not interpose by jumping up and snatching the books out of my hands. I had to be back in the factory by six in the morning, and continue my work, with intervals for breakfast and dinner, till eight o'clock at night. I read in this way many classical authors, and knew Virgil and Horace better at sixteen than I do now."

Here is an example for young men. This is indeed the royal road to learning, which may be trodden by every youth possessing the true nobility of the great and good of every age. Were there more of this spirit of perseverance, our pulpits would not lack gospel ministers, nor the heathen world missionaries.

In reviewing life's history, Dr Livingston recognizes the hand of a gracious Providence in that species of training on self-dependence, which has hitherto sustained him in his labours, and which has given him concentration of thought irrespective of the circumstances in which he may be placed.

"My reading, while at work, was carried on by placing the book on a portion of the spinning-jenny, so that I could catch sentence after sentence as I passed at my work; I thus kept up a pretty constant study, undisturbed by the roar of the machinery. To this part of my education I owe my present power of completely abstracting the mind from surrounding noises, so as to read and write with perfect comfort amidst the play of children, or near the dancing and songs of savages. . . . Looking back, now, to that life of self-denial, I cannot but feel thankful that it formed such a material part of my early education; and, were it possible, I should like to begin life over again in the same lowly style, and to pass through the same hardy training."

In order to appreciate the labours of Dr Livingston, it must be remembered that for about thirteen years he has been chiefly associated with the native tribes of Africa. For three years and a half his native tongue was completely left in desuetude, and during all this period it was but very partially used. It is not to be wondered at, that when he came at length on board an English ship, though the thoughts and emotions were deep, the words would not come. The fact of his having thus completely thrown himself among the natives is one that entitles him to speak with authority on the moral state of Africa. On one occasion he thus writes—

"I had been, during a nine weeks' tour, in closer contact with heathenism than I had ever been before; and though all, including the chief, were as kind and attentive to me as possible, and there was no want of food, yet to endure the dancing, roaring, and singing, the jeating, anecdotes, grumbling, quarrelling, and murdering of these children of nature, seemed more like a severe penance than anything I had before met with in the course of my missionary duties. I took thence a more intense disgust of heathenism than I had before, and formed a greatly elevated opinion of the latent effects of missions in the south, among tribes which are reported to have been as savage as the Makololo. The indirect benefits which, to a casual observer, lie beneath the surface, and are inappreciable, in reference to the probable wide diffusion of Christianity at some future time, are worth all the money and labour that have been expended upon them."

In taking up an ordinary map of Africa, it is found that hitherto

European knowledge has been confined chiefly to the trading towns on either side of the continent. The whole interior is marked "unexplored territory." Many conjectures and opinions have been current regarding soil, climate, produce, &c. The idea has usually been something like that which is expressed by the term wilderness. There have been no lack of supposed desert sands and terrific jungles—the undisturbed habitation of the lion, the tiger, and their varied carnivorous associates. It has remained for Dr Livingston to lay open this unexplored region, and to give us at once its climate, its natural history, its geography, and, what is most important of all, its teeming population, together with their moral condition, manners of life, and modes by which they may be reached with the gospel.

Having heard of the lake Ngami, he prosecuted his perilous journey until he gazed with delight upon its glassy waters. But he was not the mere discoverer of the fair scenery of nature. He sought the degraded tribes of Africa, and shed light upon their circumstances and character. The journey undertaken was nothing less than the exploration of the country from Linyanti, in the Makololo territory, to the city of St Paul de Loanda, on the western coast—a journey in magnitude and difficulty sufficient of itself to have immortalized any traveller. A considerable portion of the journey was accomplished by use of the bullock-waggon, and that in a country where roads of mechanical construction are almost unknown. At one time he was ready to perish for thirst, and at another fording the bridgeless river, or tracing slowly his way through the stagnant marshes. At other times there was no resource but the canoe upon the river, which had to be carried for the purpose, and launched with difficulty among the gigantic reeds. A single extract will furnish the best idea of this mode of progress through an unexplored country.

"The forests became more dense as we went north. We travelled much more in the deep gloom of the forest than in open sunlight. No passage existed on either side of the passage made by the axe. Large climbing plants entwined themselves around the trunks and branches of gigantic trees like boa-constrictors; and they often do constrict the trees by which they rise, and, killing them, stand erect themselves."

The difficulties of such a journey were enhanced by the necessity of making acquaintance with powerful tribes, most of whom had never seen the face of a white man before, but who had heard enough of slavery to dread the approach of a stranger. This difficulty was found chiefly on either coast, where the crimes of the white man had made him abhorred. In the interior, Dr Livingston has been enabled, with the key of kindness, to open the heart of the savage. In regard to some tribes he remarks—

"The people of every village treated us most liberally, presenting, besides oxen, butter, milk, and meal, more than we could stow away in our canoes. . . . They always made their presents gracefully. When an ox was given, the owner would say, 'Here is a little bit of bread for you.' The women persisted in giving me copious supplies of shrill praises, or 'lullilooing'; but though I frequently told them to modify their 'great lords' and 'great lions' to more humble expressions, they so evidently intended to do me honour, that I could not help being pleased with the poor creatures' wishes for our success."

Having accomplished his journey to the western coast, he returned to his former starting-point, and from thence set out upon a similar, and, in some respects, more difficult journey to the coast on the eastern side of Africa. This latter journey occupied about six months, during which he never knew the comfort of a bed, save such materials as nature furnished in addition to his travelling blanket. Nor is his journey the less remarkable, when we consider the frequency with which he was attacked with the fever of the country, in consequence of his exposure to wet through the day and chilling damps by night. Before he reached Quilimane, on the coast, he was reduced to almost a living skeleton. It was then that he noted feelings worthy of our study, and a sense of gratitude which all ought to experience.

"One of the discoveries I have made is, that there are vast numbers of good people in the world; and I do most devotedly tender my unfeigned thanks to that gracious One who mercifully watched over me in every position, and influenced the hearts of both black and white to regard me with favour."

In presenting the gospel at times to the benighted tribes of Africa, their astonishment was intense. He thus describes his introduction to the chief of the Makololos—

"Sechele was thus seated in his chieftainship when I made his acquaintance. On the first occasion in which I ever attempted to hold a public religious service, he remarked that it was the custom of his nation to put questions on it; and he begged me to allow him to do the same in this case. In expressing my entire willingness to answer his questions, he inquired if my forefathers knew of a future judgment. I replied in the affirmative, and began to describe the scene of the great white throne and Him who shall sit on it, from whose face the heaven and the earth shall flee away, &c. He said, 'You startle me—these words make all my bones to shake—I have no more strength in me; but my forefathers were living at the same time yours were, and how is it that they did not send them word about these things sooner? They all passed away into darkness, without knowing whether they were going.' We leave the question, withering though it be, as a testimony against the unfaithfulness of Christendom, so that each one for himself may try to frame a reply. This chief soon learned to read; and no sooner had he begun to discover the beauty of Scripture language, and to enjoy religious exercises, than he wished all his subjects to unite with him in the new religion. But here his acute mind was indeed puzzled to solve the question, how they would imitate him in anything else but in the white man's religion. In the relations of life, and the conventional maxims of his people, he felt that he was involved in the most perplexing difficulties; hence he would at times exclaim, 'O, I wish you had come to this country before I became entangled in the meshes of its customs!'"

The prosecution of his object is thus described—

"In the hope that others would be induced to join him in his attachment to Christianity, he asked me to begin family worship with him in his house. I did so; and by-and-bye was surprised to hear how well he conducted the prayer in his own simple and beautiful style; for he was quite a master of his own language. At this time we were suffering from the effects of a drought, and none except his own family, *whom he ordered to attend*, came near the meeting. 'In former times,' said he, 'when a chief was fond of hunting, all his people got dogs, and became fond of hunting too. If he was fond of dancing or music, all showed a liking to these amusements also. If the chief loved beer, they all rejoiced in strong drink. But in this case it is different. I love the Word of God, and not one of my brethren will join me.'

Sechele was not an ordinary specimen of these benighted tribes;

but even among some of the most degraded of the interior tribes Dr Livingston found the existence of religious feelings, both in regard to supreme beings, and in regard to a dim futurity. The Barotse showed some relics of a departed chief; and when asked to part with them by the white man, they replied, "O, no; he refuses." "Who refuses?" "Santura," was their reply, showing their belief in a future existence.

"Another incident, which occurred at the confluence of the Leeba and the Leeambye, may be mentioned, as showing a more vivid perception of the existence of spiritual beings, and greater proneness to worship than among the Bechuanas. Having taken lunar observations in the morning, I was waiting for a meridian altitude of the sun for the latitude; my chief boatman was sitting by, in order to pack up the instruments as soon as I had finished; there was a large halo, about 20 degs. in diameter, round the sun. Thinking that the lunnidity of the atmosphere which was indicated might betoken rain, I asked him if his experience did not lead him to the same view. 'O no,' he replied; 'it is the barimo (gods, or departed spirits) who have called a picho; don't you see they have the Lord (sun) in the centre.'"

But it is vain to give extracts from a book when every page is replete with the most interesting matter. A flower, an insect, a plant, a tree, a fish, a fowl, or a quadruped, new to the naturalist, escaped not the eye of the African explorer. But while he was alike alive to the curious and minute of natural objects, his philosophic, yet spiritual eye, recognized in the whole the reflected glory of the universal Proprietor.

Nor did he ever seem to forget the other special relation—their design in relation to humanity. Neither did he confine his observations by a reference to the existing heathenism around him only; he saw the emancipation of the slaves of America as bound up with the development of the native resources of Africa. Is it not singular, yet common in the development of God's plans, that while the solitary traveller was noting down this district as suitable for rearing cotton, and another for the cultivation of the sugar cane, the question of slavery was shaking America to the centre; while in Britain her merchant princes were asking, From whence shall we obtain a supply of cotton?

But we must close with a solitary extract from those conclusions at which he has arrived on good data.

"As far as I am myself concerned, the opening of a new central country is a matter for congratulation only in so far as it opens up a prospect for the elevation of the inhabitants. As I have elsewhere remarked, I view the end of the geographical feat as the beginning of the missionary enterprise. I take the term in its most extended signification, and include every effort made for the amelioration of our race, the promotion of all those means by which God in His providence is working, and bringing all His dealings with man to a glorious consummation."

AYR HOME MISSION.

WE are glad to learn that the Ayr congregation of United Original Seceders still manifests the missionary spirit, by continuing its efforts to reclaim the home heathen. These, as will be seen from the Report, are confined chiefly to the circulation of tracts and the holding of prayer meetings. It is fervently to be desired that Providence would soon raise up an agent qualified to preach the everlasting Gospel, visit the sick, and tell the dying of Him who died to take the sting of death away.

The congregation held its annual Missionary Meeting on the evening of Monday, the 25th January last. The meeting was well attended, and the interest in the mission work seemed unabated. The Rev. John Robertson presided, and opened the meeting with devotional exercises. After the minutes of last meeting were read and approved, the Clerk read the following Report:—

"Your Home Mission Committee fears that this, the fourth Annual Report of Mission work, will be deemed meagre and uninteresting. Although an advertisement for a missionary has repeatedly appeared in the Magazine, only a solitary letter of inquiry has been received; and that correspondent, evidently anxious for the work, and well fitted to discharge its duties, has been prevented, by the circumstances in which he is placed, from taking further steps in the matter. While your Committee deplore the want of an agent to visit the neglected outcasts in our midst, and preach peace to them through the blood of the cross, it would record, with deep gratitude, the goodness of God, in enabling the tract distributors and conductors of prayer meetings to discharge their respective duties with a constancy and zeal worthy of all praise.

"About 322 tracts and 50 *Gospel Trumpets* are weekly circulated in the districts, and are gladly received and read by the majority of those on whom the distributors call. The ladies, however, occasionally meet with opposition in their work. Some Papists, and very abandoned persons, not merely refuse to receive the tracts, but add insult to injury, by uttering abusive language against persons whose only fault, so far as they are concerned, is the desire and attempt to do them good. So hardened are some, that they have the audacity to tell the distributors that a piece of money will be more acceptable than a tract; and if they come with that in their hands they will receive it, but the tracts they won't have. This opposition, however, your Committee is glad to know, instead of damping, has rather stimulated the zeal of the distributors. Though wisely restraining from forcing tracts on those who could not appreciate nor use these evidences of their desire to promote their best interests, they have invariably availed themselves of opportunities offered, out of the mission district, to put their usual number of tracts into circulation. Some of the people who receive the tracts extend their influence by giving them in loan to their less favoured neighbours, and encourage the distributors by the hearty welcome with which they receive their weekly visits, and their expressions of regret when circumstances have prevented them from making the usual call, saying that they missed their Sabbath-day's reading. Indeed, many of them would have no suitable reading for that day, except for the efforts of the distribution. Your Committee therefore hopes that good results will flow from these labours, and feel encouraged to continue the circulation of Bible truth, depending on the Divine blessing to make it effectual in converting to the fear and worship of God those who have hitherto hated Him and despised His Gospel.

"Your Committee regrets that so few district prayer meetings can be maintained. Such fellowship meetings are well fitted to draw down the Divine blessing on the whole community, as well as on those who attend them. If more were banded together as God's remembrancers, we might confidently anticipate 'times of refreshing to come from the presence of the Lord.' It is with gratitude to God, however, that your Committee reports the perseverance of our brethren, Messrs Miller and Jamieson, in conducting the prayer meeting in Garden Street. The attendance continues as good as formerly—about twelve on an average; and the brethren who lead the devotions find it both a pleasing and a profitable duty.

"Your Committee has much pleasure in reporting the labours of our brother, Mr John Cairns, at New Prestwick. For a period of three years he has held a prayer meeting every Sabbath evening, unaided and almost unknown. It was only a few weeks ago that your Secretary was made aware of the meeting; and, though it is not formally connected with the mission, yet being held by a member of the congregation, he deemed it too important, and too intimately related to our operations, to remain any longer 'unnoticed and unknown.' Through the kind permission of Mr Cairns, he visited the meeting. It is held in a private house beyond Prestwick toll; and on the night of the visit about sixteen, evidently non-attenders at any church, were present. After devotional exercises, including the reading of a portion of Scripture, Mr Cairns gave an outline of one of Mr Robertson's discourses. His simple and graphic statements were listened to with breathless attention, and, being delivered in an earnest and impressive style, were calculated to touch their hearts.

Every one appeared to regard Mr Cairns as a benefactor, and, at parting, bade him farewell, with expressions of thanks.

"This is an example worthy of praise and imitation. Without the encouragement which companionship in labour gives—without even seeking to have his work known and acknowledged by man—Mr Cairns has continued, for three whole years, to pray with, and instruct, all whom he could gather together in that place. May we not expect the Divine blessing to accompany such devoted labours? 'Though He tarry long, let us wait for it.' In His good time He will vindicate the faithfulness of His promises by causing the former and latter rain to descend upon the fallow ground prepared and sown by His servant. The work at New Prestwick may be regarded as a token that God will visit and revive the mission; and, in reviewing its past history, we may well erect our Ebenezer, and say, 'Hitherto hath the Lord blessed us.'"

The Rev. William Robertson, Dundee, in a few appropriate and encouraging remarks, moved the adoption of the Report. He alluded to the fact that Seceders could not now be taunted with the want of the missionary spirit. Under the inspection of Synod, inroads were being made on our home heathenism, which he hoped would meet with success. The Report now read, he remarked, had a dark side and a bright. It was said that, though efforts had been made, a missionary agent could not be obtained. This was not to be wondered at, when the state of the body, as regards probationers, was considered; but he hoped the Ayr congregation would soon get an agent to visit the spiritually destitute, and break the bread of life amongst them. He was glad to pass on to the bright side of the picture. The fact that so many ladies were employed in weekly distributing tracts and *Trumpets* was very encouraging. Besides affording profitable reading, these visits showed the people that others were interested in their welfare, and desired to do them good. The prayer meetings, he further remarked, were bright spots in what otherwise would be a dark region. Such associations were well fitted to draw down lasting benefits on the people. Many motives, he added, should encourage the congregation to persevere in the work; such as love to the souls of men, and a desire to promote their best interests—love to the Saviour, and a desire to spread His declarative glory—love to our native land—Christian restoration, which seeks the good of our natal soil in the only hopeful way, by endeavouring to imbue its people with that righteousness which exalteth a nation. The reverend gentleman concluded his address by heartily moving the adoption of the Report.

The motion was seconded by Bailie Paterson, and unanimously carried.

The following resolutions were proposed, seconded, and unanimously passed:—

"That this congregation, aware of the injury done to religion and morals by a class of literature, too easily procured, and extensively read by a section of the community, resolves, in order to counteract as far as possible the baneful effects of these publications, to continue the circulation of tracts and *Trumpets*, depending on the Divine blessing for success; and, in acknowledging God's goodness in the past, would express the obligations of the congregation to the ladies for their zeal and perseverance in that department of the mission work."

"That this congregation acknowledges with gratitude the goodness of God in enabling our brethren to continue the prayer meetings in the mission districts; in thanking them for their constancy and zeal, resolves prayerfully to support their efforts, and to embrace any other opportunities Providence may present of extending the good work."

The Rev. William Robertson having engaged in prayer, the Chairman closed the meeting with praise and the benediction.

MAINS' STREET SABBATH SCHOOL.

THE Sabbath School in connection with the Original Secession Church, Mains' Street, Glasgow, held its annual meeting with the congregation, on Wednesday evening, the 3d February. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, the attendance was very encouraging, being much beyond the average of a congregational

meeting. The Rev. Professor Murray occupied the chair, and the meeting was opened with praise and prayer.

Professor Murray, in introducing the business of the meeting, after a few preliminary remarks, said—Most of you are aware of the difference between Sabbath schools, as generally conducted, and those sanctioned by the Synod. The former include, and many of them consist for the most part of the children of church members, whereas ours are intended solely for the benefit of that large and increasing section of the young and rising generation, whose parents are unconnected with the visible Christian Church, are living outside its pale, and are, to all intents and purposes, heathen. This we reckon a very important difference. We condemn as strongly as any the practice now so common among church members, of sending their children to the Sabbath school, holding that they are bound personally to instruct them, and that the performance of this duty in the case of such parents cannot lawfully be devolved upon a substitute. Of course, it will not be supposed that we here mean that parents, even in the case supposed, are alone to teach their children. The pastor may do so likewise, on week-days or Sabbath-days; he may keep a Sabbath or week-day class for the instruction of the young among his flock, as many of our ministers are in the habit of doing. And as the pastor may co-operate with the parent, so may the schoolmaster, and so may others in various ways. What we condemn is the practice, now so prevalent, of professing parents sending their children to the Sabbath-evening schools, instead of keeping them at home under their own eye on these evenings, and teaching them the things of God. Another objectionable feature in the generality of Sabbath schools, is the latitudinarian principle on which they are conducted, their sole object being to teach the children what are called the grand essential doctrines of the gospel, and there being no proper guarantee, even in respect of these doctrines, for the orthodoxy of the teachers, who usually include persons of all denominations. On the other hand, our schools are taught by members of the body in full communion, and are, to some extent, under ministerial and sessional inspection; and their object is to instruct the children in the whole truth of Christ, as set forth in the subordinate standards of the Church. They have also in view as their object, the religious and moral reformation of the parents. Such, in particular, is our school in Mains' Street, here. Its aim is to promote the spiritual welfare of the neglected young, by instructing them, not only in the elementary principles of the religion of the Bible, but in all Bible truths, and by training them to church-going habits, and eventually, through the Divine blessing, bringing them into the full fellowship of the Church, and making them altogether such as we ourselves are. It is not in my own power to be present at the Sabbath School, but I attend occasionally the monthly meetings of the teachers. I examine likewise the tracts before they are distributed; and it is expressly provided that none be admitted as teachers, except in the way of the minister conversing with them, and being satisfied as to their fitness for the work. I have been the more particular in pointing out the difference between our system and the system generally pursued, because some are apt to confound the one with the other, and to suspect that by our Sabbath-school operations we are departing from our Testimony, and falling in with the defections of the times. On the contrary, we are simply exercising a right which all have, to do the parent's part to orphans, or the neglected young. If we may warrantably feed and clothe their bodies if unprovided, may we not as warrantably endeavour to communicate spiritual instruction to their mind, if there are none else to do it? If this labour of love may also be performed by Christians singly, may it not be performed by them socially, provided that in this latter way it may be more efficiently performed? And if done on a week-day, why not on a Sabbath-day? If it is no breach of the Sabbath to pull one's ox or one's ass out of a pit into which it has fallen, and where, if it remain, it must perish, is it any breach of the Sabbath to endeavour to pull some of our poor heathen children out of the pit of ignorance, sin, and misery, into which they have sunk, and where, if they are left in that state, they must perish eternally? Indeed, we believe that the work of instructing the neglected young is pre-eminently suitable work for the Sabbath; we believe that the Sabbath is the best day of the week for prosecuting it. I do not think it necessary to extend these remarks. I would just observe, that our great object should be, to be instrumental, in the use of scriptural means, in promoting the glory of the Redeemer and the salvation of sinners. We profess to be holding the truth fast; let us also endeavour to hold it forth. Both duties are compatible with each other; nor

can we expect that the performance of the one will be accepted by God, and accompanied with His blessing, if we do not combine with it the performance of the other. Let us therefore go forward, in the use of scriptural means, for advancing the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom in this respect, taking encouragement from the cheering assurance, that they that sow in tears shall reap in joy, and that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Mr Gillies, the Superintendent of the Sabbath School, then read the Report of the operations of the Sabbath-School Association for the year 1857. The number of teachers is 15; and the average nightly attendance of scholars during the year has been 126, being an increase of 48 as compared with the year 1856. Towards the close of the year, the teachers had succeeded in bringing to church 21 of their scholars; but only two of the parents had been placed upon the church attendance roll. It was stated, however, that the number of parents upon the church attendance roll on the first month of the present year had been increased to 5. The attendance of the scholars is also larger now than would be inferred from the Annual Report—the nightly average for the last few months being more than 150. It was further stated, verbally, that, since the expiry of the period to which the Report refers, a number of ladies in the congregation had formed themselves into a Clothing Association in connection with the Sabbath School, and had already been the means of relieving the need of those who were believed to be really necessitous and deserving. The Report next referred to the preparation of an address by the teachers, which, being printed at their instance, and bearing on the face of it to be from the teachers of Mains' Street Original Secession Sabbath School, was addressed, by name, to each parent, in the hope that a direct appeal from the teachers of their children might have more effect than tracts intended for general circulation. The chief topic of this first address was the duty of parents themselves to instruct their children—to give first themselves and then their children to the Lord. Having set themselves right with the parents, by leaving them no excuse for supposing that any one can relieve them of their obligations to instruct their children, the Association purpose, if their funds admit, to renew these appeals, varying the topic as circumstances may seem to require.* After telling of material prosperity, the Report proceeds to speak cautiously, but hopefully, of spiritual good accomplished through the instrumentality of the Association. The Report, parenthetically, vindicates the warrant of the teachers to prosecute their work, the argument being founded on the text, "Let him that heareth, say, Come." It concludes with an urgent appeal to the hearts and consciences of young men in the congregation to become teachers, and with an appeal to the congregation generally to give the Association the aid of their contributions and their prayers.

Mr Hugh Howie and Mr Buchanan, elders in the congregation, moved and seconded the adoption of the Report, with suitable remarks; and the motion, being put to the meeting from the chair, was cordially adopted.

The Rev. John Ritchie, of Shottsburn, commenced an impressive address, with an allusion to the recent Sepoy atrocities, which have caused the ears of all who have heard of them to tingle. He then showed that human depravity was the same at home as abroad, and that it was only the restraining grace of God which prevented its manifestation to the same extent among the home heathen at our own doors. Pointing out the only means of preventing the dangerous classes at home from becoming a terror to society, and going down to perdition, he spoke of the Sabbath school as one of the best means of reaching them, and making them useful members of society and heirs of glory, inasmuch as the young, in the providence of God, were more susceptible of serious impressions than their parents. The work of the Sabbath school, properly conducted, was no interference with the prerogative of the parent, as was sometimes alleged; for "interference" implied that the parents would do their duty to their children if left alone, which was notoriously not the case in the families to which such Sabbath schools as that of Mains' Street directed their attention. The warrant for engaging in this work was clear from Scripture, from reason, and from common sense—three grounds of action which would always be found to harmonize. Andrew had no sooner found the Saviour than he went in search of his brother, Peter; and Philip no sooner followed Jesus than he addressed Nathaniel, and answered his objection, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth,"

* We have seen a copy of the address: it is excellent. It will find a place in our pages afterwards.—ED. O. S. M.

with the beautiful reply, "Come and see." And if it were urged, that Andrew and Philip had a special commission to teach others, the case of the woman of Samaria was still more conclusive; for surely no one would venture to say that the Saviour disapproved of her conduct when, having found the Messiah, she left her water-pot, and went into the city and said to the men, "Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" He certainly claimed for the ordained ministry distinguishing prerogatives as ambassadors for Christ; but if any one saw a house on fire, and the inmates in danger of destruction, would he leave it to the watchman to sound the alarm when he next came round to the scene of danger? Would he not rather force open the door, or, if necessary, smash in the window, and cry, "fire, fire," with all his might? And if common sense and natural humanity dictated such a course, was there not an infinitely stronger reason why all who named the name of Christ should hasten, if, by God's blessing, they might be the means of snatching, as brands from the burning, those who were in imminent danger of going down to everlasting fire? Mr Ritchie then briefly vindicated Sabbath-school teachers from the uncharitable accusation, that they met together on Sabbath evening in the spirit of levity, and even, as had been shamefully asserted, for idle gossip with one another. He knew those of them who shed bitter tears over the appalling spiritual destitution around them, and who were constrained, amidst great difficulties and discouragements, to persevering and prayerful labour on behalf of those who were perishing for lack of knowledge. Mr Ritchie concluded with an animating exhortation to the teachers present to weary not in well-doing; and encouraged them to persevere, by detailing some of his own experience as a Sabbath-school teacher.

The Rev. Dr Blakely, of Kirkintilloch, said that Sabbath-school teachers had no ground for discouragement because of the opposition and objections by which they were assailed. If there were no opposition, he would begin very much to question whether, after all, they were engaged in a work of God; for he had never known, in the history of the Church, under the former or present economy, any party, engaged earnestly in God's work, who did not meet with difficulties from the world without, and from individuals within. If there were no opposition, there would be reason to fear that Satan was satisfied with the scheme. Dr Blakely then alluded to the violent opposition which Protestant Sabbath schools were meeting with, especially in Edinburgh, from the emissaries of antichrist. While he thoroughly hated latitudinarianism, he felt great sympathy with a soul which, feeling the power of the gospel, used every effort to instruct others in religion, though these efforts might not have the recognition of a congregation. He fully agreed with all that had been said to-night about the latitudinarian form of Sabbath-school instruction; but he could not but look back with sympathy to those who originated the Sabbath-school system, and who first shed light upon that moral darkness which the Church had overlooked. They, at least, hung out a lamp, by the aid of which that moral darkness had become visible. Dr Blakely then referred to the recent disclosures of commercial immorality, as evidencing that it was not only what were called "the masses" that needed to have the great truths of religion brought home to them. We had not felt as we ought that we are Christians, and, as such, are bound to bring souls, high and low, to the Saviour. There was no reason but a false and faithless delicacy why the clerk in his counting-house, and the shopman in his warehouse, and all Christians, as opportunity offered, should not press upon all to whom they had access that salvation which was equally necessary for all, whether in the most exalted positions of worldly rank, or in the lowest depths of outward degradation. Dr Blakely then proceeded to point out the salutary, direct, and reflex influence of Sabbath-school work upon the parents of the children, and illustrated his remarks by several striking anecdotes. He further reminded his hearers that Glasgow, as well as other places, was mapped out by antichrist for the operation of societies in various forms—every one doing what they could for the ultimate restoration of the country to the See of Rome. If Protestant Sabbath-school teachers gave up those families over whom, through the children, they had obtained a powerful influence for good, they would be taken in charge by the priests or the Jesuits, who, in innumerable ways, were using the most zealous, crafty, and unscrupulous means to poison the minds of the inmates of dwelling-houses, warehouses, and public works in Glasgow and elsewhere.

Mr M'Kay moved a vote of thanks to Dr Blakely and Mr Ritchie for their ad-

mirable addresses, and for their kindness in countenancing the meeting with their presence, at great inconvenience to themselves. The motion was warmly responded to by the meeting. On the motion of Mr M'Kay, a vote of thanks was also awarded to the Sabbath-School Association.

Mr Campbell then moved a vote of thanks to Professor Murray for presiding ; and the motion having been most cordially received, the meeting was closed with praise and prayer.

HISLOP'S TWO BABYLONS.*

THERE are striking indications, in various ways, that a new and remarkable era is about to dawn on our world. He who made the revival of learning in Europe, and the invention of the art of printing in the beginning of the sixteenth century, the means of preparing the way for the introduction of a new epoch in the condition of many nations—the effects of which continue to this day—has no doubt important ends to accomplish by all the singular inventions and discoveries of present times. If not so much as a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father, can we doubt that the various instruments by whom such wonders have been lately achieved have all been in the hand of the great Ruler, and that each, in his own sphere, has, under Divine direction, been made to contribute to the accomplishment of the purposes of the supreme Disposer.

This is in many respects the age of progress. Event succeeds event, and one remarkable achievement follows another, with more than usual rapidity. Not to mention the amazing ways in which art and science, in their different departments, have triumphantly surmounted the most formidable obstacles—the purposes to which steam has been applied, with such marvellous and beneficial results—or the degree in which electricity has been brought under human control, so that communications are sent and returned on its wings, literally with lightning speed, from city to city, kingdom to kingdom, and one end of the earth to the other : nor to dwell on the wonders in mechanics in our already launched leviathans, introducing a new era in navigation, by which what was so much lacking at the breaking out of the Indian Mutiny, only a few months ago—the speedy transit of an army to a distant part of the globe—is already furnished. Within these few years, too, geology professes to trace the history of our planet upward through immense cycles, into depths of antiquity, which it little less taxes the imagination to realize than the immensity and glories of the universe which astronomy has brought to view.

But in close combination with all this, in respect to the dates of their developement, researches of a different kind have also been ushering themselves into notice, and arresting an almost universal attention. The dark cloud, in which the central regions of the great African continent had been shrouded for many ages, has been all at

* *The Two Babylons ; or the Papal Worship Proved to be the Worship of Nimrod and his Wife.* With Wood-cut Illustrations from Nineveh, Babylon, Egypt, Pompeii, &c. By the Rev. Alexander Hislop, East Free Church, Arbroath. Second Edition. Edinburgh : William Whyte & Co. London : Longman & Co.

once dispersed. Under the guidance of an all-pervading Providence, efforts of an extraordinary kind have been simultaneously put forth, without concert on the part of man, by which the unexplored territories, of many thousand miles extent, both on the north and south of the Equator, have been completely disclosed to the view of the civilized world. In the volume referred to in our preceding pages, the results of the Herculean efforts and indomitable courage of a Livingston, regulated by the highest Christian principle, are stated, and have called forth the world's admiration; while in the achievements of Dr Barth, in a parallel line in the north with those of his compeer in the south, and only a little less remarkable, are now being laid before the public in a succession of intensely interesting volumes.

Recently, also, the Christian world was happily surprised by the discovery of the archives of the Assyrian empire, in which a record of facts relating to a very remote antiquity, confirmatory of the truth of inspired history, had been preserved thousands of years, in a remarkable degree of integrity, in vast mounds of earth, on which flocks had browsed and shepherds spread their tents for ages. The labours of the Layards, the Rawlinsons, and the Bottas, in excavating and deciphering these ancient writings, have laid the Church and the nations under a deep debt of gratitude to the indefatigable instruments, whom God saw meet to raise up, and to impart capacity for the accomplishment of so great a work. The master-mind of Bunsen, also—who, we are sorry to find, is now become tinged with dangerous heresy—has been successfully directed to put forth its powers, in placing, in a clear and impressive light, the varied information as to the customs, the religion, and attainments of the Egyptian nation, which had been successfully extracted, with great ability and ingenuity, by numerous travellers and antiquaries, from the relics of the ancient greatness of that once famous kingdom—its sculptures—its temples and palaces, with their inscriptions, and even from its receptacles of the dead.

But what, it may be asked, has all this to do with the work before us? In our judgment, the affinity is very intimate, inasmuch as we are persuaded Mr Hislop's work, along with that with which he is now occupied on a kindred subject—*The Apocalypse of the Past*—entitle him to a place in the first ranks of those who have been honoured by their discoveries to throw intensely interesting light, in different ways, on some of the darkest pages of the world's history, at the same time that they furnish a new and unexpected class of evidence of the truth of revealed religion, in opposition to scepticism on the one hand, and the worst forms of idolatry and superstition on the other.

We were scarcely expecting to have new light furnished us regarding the various phases of heathen mythology. Classical learning, it was generally supposed, had long ago reached its culminating point in this direction. Nothing, we were disposed to think, could be added to the stores of this kind of lore which had been heaped up by the most renowned seats of learning in South Britain and Germany, and the researches of famous scholars—the Spanheims and Erasmuses of a former age, and the Neanders and Geseninses of our own. But Mr Hislop

has in this work thrown a flood of light on heathen mythology, which cannot fail to render it deeply interesting to all the lovers of classical learning—though this is only an incidental result flowing from the line of argument pursued in the accomplishment of the great object for which his laborious researches—the results of which are here set before us—were undertaken. The light thus furnished is also such as commands belief, from its being so much in harmony with what an argument *a priori* would lead us to expect. The author has all but demonstrated, from the most ancient records of profane history extant, along with recent discoveries, the unity of all the systems of idolatry which have existed, and now exist, on the earth—that they have all spread from a common centre—Babylon,—had their rise in the apostacy and ambition of Nimrod—and that they are based on a perversion of revealed truth, as given to our first parents and the more ancient patriarchs, and handed down by tradition, while this was the divinely-appointed medium of its preservation and transmission, from generation to generation.

The extent of learning and research which are clearly manifest in this work is remarkable. Mr Hislop is equally at home in the field of remotest ancient history, whether in relation to Greece and Rome, Phœnicia and Assyria, Egypt and Babylon, India and China, or the system of the Druids and of the Lamas of Thibet, and in the fields of modern discovery; and his knowledge of different languages, especially of the Chaldee and its various dialects, including Hebrew, Arabic, and Sanscrit, greatly aids him in his investigations and the exhibition of his proof.

It was imagined, also, that we had abundant light already as to the character of Popery—that the abominations of this system had been already presented to us in the very darkest colours, so that to think of throwing an additional shade of deeper darkness over these was next to an impossibility. But this feat Mr Hislop has succeeded in accomplishing. We had no doubt a fixed impression that there was much, very much, in the maxims and practices of the antichristian system that was very closely allied to Paganism. But it was left to Mr Hislop to demonstrate the amazing extent in which Paganism and Popery are identical—that in the development of Popery the god of this world succeeded in establishing his dominion over Christendom by the very system, though under a somewhat different guise, by means of which he had held all the heathen nations so long in abject subjection to his yoke, and had nearly banished the true knowledge of God from the earth.

The great object of our author in this work is to make this astounding fact clearly manifest; and he has done so by an astonishing array of witnesses and a varied induction of evidence, in the collection of which he has exacted contributions from quarters to which but few of his readers have access. Mr Hislop makes it clear as day, that the Romish perverters of Christianity have not the credit of originality in the corruptions with which they deluged the Church, but were the mean, sycophantish, though artful, copyists of Paganism.

In separate chapters our author shows, under distinct heads, by an

almost resistless force of evidence, that the Pagan and Papal systems are identical in their "*Objects of Worship* ;—*Festivals*—Christmas, Lady-day," &c. ;—" *Doctrine and Discipline*—baptismal regeneration, justification by works, the sacrifice of the mass, extreme unction, and purgatory and prayers for the dead ;—*Rites and Ceremonies*—idol-processions, relic-worship, clothing and crowning images, lamps and wax-candles, and sign of the cross ;—*Religious Orders*—sovereign pontiff, cardinals, priests, monks, and nuns."

Did our space permit, we would have had pleasure in presenting our readers with large extracts, but must confine ourselves to the following specimen of the kind of argument by which our author establishes the respective points, in the proof of which he is occupied :—

"SECTION II.—THE MOTHER AND CHILD, AND THE ORIGINAL OF THE CHILD.

"While this was the *theory*," (referring to what he had shown as to the admission of one supreme being among Pagans, in the preceding section), the first person in the Godhead was *practically* overlooked. As the Great Invisible, taking no immediate concern in human affairs, he was 'venerated in silence'¹—that is, in point of fact, was not worshipped by the multitude at all. The same thing is strikingly illustrated in India at this day. Though Brahma, according to the sacred books of the Hindoos, is the first person of the Hindoo Triad, and the religion of Hindostan is called by his name, yet he is never worshipped, and not a single temple in all India is now erected to his honour.² So also is it in those countries of Europe where the Papal system is most completely developed. In Italy, as travellers universally admit, all appearance of worshipping the King Eternal and Invisible is almost extinct, while the Mother and Child are the grand objects of worship. Exactly so, in this latter respect, also was it in ancient Babylon. The Babylonians supremely worshipped a Goddess Mother and a Son, who was represented in pictures and in images as an infant or child in his mother's arms. From Babylon, this worship of the mother and the child spread to the ends of the whole earth. In Egypt, the mother and the child were worshipped under the names of Isis and Osiris ;³ in India, even to this day, as Isi and Iswara ;⁴ in Greece, as Demeter and Couros ;⁵ in Asia, as Cybele and Atys ;⁶ in Pagan Rome, as Semele and the child Bacchus ;⁷ and even in Thibet, in China, and Japan, the Jesuit missionaries were astonished to find the exact counterpart of Madonna and her child as devoutly worshipped as in Papal Rome itself. Shing Moo, "the Holy Mother" in China, is represented in a niche, with a babe in her arms, and a *glory* around her, exactly as if Roman Catholic artists had been employed to set her up."⁸

The argument as to the original of the child follows ; but for this we

¹ Jamblichus, *De Mysteriis*, viii. 2.

² Col. Kennedy's *Sanscrit Researches*.

³ Called most frequently Horus, Bunsen, vol. i. p. 414.

⁴ Kennedy, p. 46. Though Iswara is the husband of Isi, yet he is also represented as an infant at her breast.

⁵ Sophocles, *Antigone*, 1121.

⁶ Dymock's *Classical Dictionary*, 'Cybele.'

⁷ *Ovid*.

⁸ The very name by which the Italians commonly designate the Virgin, is just the literal translation of one of the titles of the Babylonian Goddess. As Baal or Bel was the name of the great male divinity of Babylon, so the female divinity was called Beltis, from the Chaldee Bsalti, which, in English, is equivalent to "My Lady ;" in Latin, to "Mea Domina," which again is corrupted, in Italian, into the well-known "Madonna."

cannot find room. The above is a fair specimen of the work throughout its various chapters—selected for its brevity, not for being more striking than a multitude of other places.

Mr Hislop has devoted the last chapter of his work to "*The Two Developments Historically and Prophetically considered.*" This is a very interesting chapter to the student of prophecy; and those who may differ in their theories of the interpretation of the Apocalypse from Mr Hislop will hail his suggestions on some points, especially on that regarding the import of the "image of the beast," one of the darkest emblems of an enigmatical part of Scripture.

Our opinion of the work has been already interspersed, and need not here be repeated. It will, we think, say little for the taste or the learning of the age if it do not receive an extensive circulation. While the work is especially adapted to the learned, and the force of some parts of the argument cannot be fully felt without some acquaintance with ancient literature, it is, in its great substance, level to the capacity of the ordinary reader. In a work in which some parts of the argument is of necessity very abstruse, it is not expected that all will be able to see clearly the links of the chain of reasoning by which Mr Hislop arrives at his conclusions in every case; but in general this is very palpable. As an overwhelming argument against Popery, it is scarcely possible to estimate the value of this work. Did our statesmen and legislators read and ponder the proofs contained in this volume, as to the character of Popery, it is not easy to see how they could continue to give it national countenance and support. In fact, the kind of spirit which has led so many to encourage the giving of national support and countenance to Popery, has led, and continues to dispose, many to act a similar part in relation to the debasing idolatries of Hindostan.

CRITICAL NOTICE.

The Duty of Abstaining from Debt. By the late Rev. Greville Ewing. Glasgow: George Gallie. Edinburgh: J. C. Jack.

This is a reprint of a sermon preached in 1821, and published by request at that time. We presume the present commercial crisis has suggested the propriety of its republication. Mr Gallie has acted judiciously in sending it forth at a time when some at least may be disposed to listen to its admonitions. Had the spirit of the text, "Owe no man anything, but to love one another," been regarded in the commercial world, the community would have been saved the shame of recent bankruptcy, and thousands would have escaped the privation and misery into which foolish and fraudulent debts have led them.

We cordially recommend this sermon to our readers. It is at once clear, substantial, suitable, and seasonable. The value of the publication is enhanced by recommendatory notices from the Rev. Alexander Frazer and William Symington, D.D., and by an appendix upon the bill system, so pernicious in modern times.

RELIGIOUS AND MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

THE ORGAN QUESTION.

THIS question, to which we have once and again referred in our pages, is likely to come under discussion in the Supreme Courts of both the Free and United Presbyterian Churches at their first meeting; and it will then be seen to what extent a disposition to tolerate this innovation in the worship of the Presbyterian Church is cherished in these two influential denominations. We give the following report of what took place in the Glasgow United Presbyterian Presbytery at its meeting on the 9th February, as given in the *Witness* :—

"This question came before the Presbytery yesterday, in consequence of an interrogation addressed at last meeting of Presbytery to the session of Claremont Street congregation (Rev. Mr M'Ewan's), respecting the correctness of a rumour that had gone abroad about an organ being used in public worship by that congregation.

The Rev. Mr M'Ewan, as Moderator of the Session, read a statement in its behalf, repudiating any desire or intention to act in any manner contrary to the injunctions of the Presbytery; but admitting that the organ in question had been occasionally used, not in the public worship of the congregation, but in a prayer meeting. For that meeting he held himself responsible. It was conducted as he thought fit, and when he thought fit. He deemed it a meeting with which the Presbytery had really nothing to do. He did not challenge—on the contrary, he was quite ready to admit—the right of the Presbytery to enter upon the inquiry which they had instituted; but he thought it would have been more courteous had those members of Presbytery who deemed it their duty to move in the matter apprized him of their intention, instead of bringing the subject up at last meeting after he had left. The forms of procedure might perhaps say nothing against such a course; but it certainly was not the most courteous course to pursue. In point of fact, he deemed the course that had been followed in the matter might become a dangerous precedent.

"Mr M'Ewan having concluded his statements, the Rev. Mr Mitchell, Kirkintilloch, moved that the further consideration of the case take place in private.

"Rev. Mr M'Ewan.—Such a proposal is most ridiculous.

"Rev. Mr Burgess moved that, as the matter was a question of discipline, it be referred to the Synod.

"Rev. George Jeffrey.—That was a thing they could not do. They, as a Presbytery, had made certain inquiries respecting Claremont Street congregation, and they must now state their mind upon the subject of them. To send the matter to the Synod, in the circumstances, would be absurd.

"Rev. Mr Edwards was not surprised at the case coming up before them in the present form. The late decision of Synod was very unsatisfactory. He had the feeling that the Presbytery, by interfering in the matter, were doing what it was most dangerous for courts, whether civil or ecclesiastical, to do—stretching their authority. They were taking a step that was only too likely to bring them into collision with the spirit of the age.

"Rev. Mr M'Gill thought it a question of forbearance. They had not enough of literature on the matter to come to any satisfactory conclusion.

"Rev. Brown Johnstone, with reference to the want of courtesy in not giving intimation of the matter to Mr M'Ewan, said that it was not a matter of private wrong, but of public scandal, and, being so, the scriptural rule did not apply. The present question was, in his opinion, a question of order or disorder, government or anarchy. The Session of Claremont Street had exhibited a contemptuous disregard of the decision of the Presbytery.

"Rev. Mr Ker agreed with Mr Edwards, and thought the explanation of the Session of Claremont Street satisfactory, and moved accordingly.

"Rev. Mr M'Gavin, though against not only all instrumental music, but all choirs, was disposed to second Mr Ker.

"Rev. Mr Wood, Campsie, strongly denounced the use of organs. It was a question which, if agitated in their churches, would originate a new secession.

"After a desultory conversation, it was at length agreed to accept the explanation of the Session, on the understanding that the congregation bring the whole matter before the Synod, in the way of petition and memorial, at next meeting in May, and that, in the interim, no use be made of the organ."

INDIA.

THE FORCE OF EXAMPLE.—In the course of the Bishop of Oxford's speech at a missionary meeting held some time ago, he related the following interesting and instructive anecdote, illustrative of the power of Christian integrity upon the heathen :—

"The other day I met a gentleman of high rank, who was a resident in India for thirty years. He told me that upon one occasion the Rajah of Gwalior, the ancestor of that Rajah who has stood so faithfully by us in the present mutinies, said to him, 'How is it that you English have so great a command over us?' His reply was, 'It is because you pray to an idol which can do no good to you, while we pray to the God of heaven, through his only Son, and our prayers are heard.' The man was still for a moment. At last he said, 'I believe you are right.' Mark how curiously you may trace the hand of God in this last outbreak. Why did that man's family remain faithful to us? I verily believe that it was mainly on account of the moral and religious influence which the Resident obtained over that man's heart. He had got to trust him implicitly. The Resident had helped him to recover a large debt of which he had always despaired; and when it was paid, it came home in bullock-waggons, and the Rajah sent to say that he had ordered a certain number, containing £400,000, to stop at the Resident's door, as his share. Of course the Resident's answer was, 'I cannot take a single penny from you. What I have done I have done as a matter of right and justice.' The Rajah said to him, 'What a fool you were not to take the money! Nobody would have known it. I should never have told it.' 'But,' said the Resident, 'there is One who would have known it—the eye that sleepeth not; and my own conscience would never have left me a moment's rest.' Upon which the Rajah said, 'You English are a wonderful people; no Indian would have done that.' When the Resident was going away, the Rajah sent for him, and asked him for advice as to his future policy. 'I will give you this advice,' said the Resident—'It is very likely that troublesome days will come; but don't be led away. It may appear as though the power of the Company was going to be swept away. Don't believe it: it never will be; and those who stand firm by the Company, will in the end find that they have made the best choice.' The Rajah's reply was, 'I believe you are right;' and he transmitted that doctrine down to those who came after him."

There is reason to think that, had the resident Europeans and the servants of the Company, both civil and military, been characterized by Christian principle, and had the Indian Government, instead of ignoring, openly declared in favour of Christianity, and while it refrained from all attempts at propagating true religion by force, had it simply given negative toleration to others, except in as far as their principles tended to sap the foundations of society, this mutiny would have been averted. It is remarkable that the Lawrences and the Edwards, the Nicholsons and the Havelocks, who gave all encouragement to missionary work, have been at once the most successful champions in the field, as generals, and the best governors, in their respective spheres, as British Commissioners; while it has been only by singular interpositions of Providence that the infatuated

conduct of those who were disposed to seek safety by countenancing Paganism, and discouraging Christianity, has not brought still wider and more irremediable disaster on the whole of our empire in the east.

The fidelity of the native Christians, too, is admirable, notwithstanding their being treated by Government as a degraded class. Yet there is no small cause to fear that the same short-sighted carnal policy will still be pursued by the Government, at home and abroad, in our administration of Indian affairs.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN TURKEY.

The Rev. J. Porter, in a letter dated Damascus, October 12, communicates an important case, illustrative of the state of the laws in Turkey relating to religious liberty. Premising "that it is not very easy to determine" the actual state of the Turkish law on the question, he says—

"The firmans granted on the subject are about as explicit as Delphian oracles—at least, when interpreted by the Sheikh-el-Islam at Constantinople, or the judges in the provinces. In England it is generally believed that complete religious liberty has been established, and that Mahometans by birth, as well as Christian renegades, are now free to embrace Christianity; but in Turkey it is just as generally believed that the law pronouncing death on the apostate is still in force, so far as the former class are concerned. Most people who know Turkey, will admit that the real nature of her laws can only be ascertained from a study of her practice; and so the interpretation of the firmans which have been thought to guarantee liberty of conscience must be sought for in the decisions given in such cases as may arise. The following case, therefore, has a peculiar importance at the present time, and I would beg to introduce it to the attention of all interested in Turkish affairs:—

"Some 22 years ago, a Christian man and woman of Nebk, a village 40 miles north of Damascus, embraced Islamism in order to contract an illegal marriage. They had subsequently a family of four sons and a daughter. It was well known that the change of faith was only nominal. The father did not frequent the mosque or unite with the Mahometans in their prayers, and the sons, as they grew up, frequently attended the Christian Church. Five years ago the father died, and on his death-bed expressed his abhorrence of the act he had been led to commit. With his last breath he solemnly entreated his wife and children to return to Christianity. Since that time the family have made several attempts to be formally recognized by some section of the Christian Church; but the clergy declined to receive them through fear of the law. A branch of our mission was recently established in Nebk, and application was made to the Rev. Mr Ferrette, the superintendent, by Khalil, the eldest son, now 21 years of age, and subsequently by Abdu, the second, for admission into the Protestant Church. Mr Ferrette consented to give them religious instruction, which they received with great eagerness and thankfulness. He then consulted me regarding the propriety of further procedure. I stated that, as religious liberty had been guaranteed by a hatti-sherif to all classes of the Sultan's subjects, I considered we were legally entitled to receive the young men into our communion.

"On Friday, the 2d inst., a Turkish officer called Aly Bey arrived in Nebk. He heard the story, and immediately ordered the Sheikh of the village to seize Khalil. The order was obeyed, and the young man was dragged from his house at night to the presence of the officer. His arms and hands were then bound together between pieces of wood, and his legs secured by a heavy chain. This being done, the Bey demanded of what religion he was. 'I am a Christian,' was the reply. The Bey struck him repeatedly with a heavy kurbaj on the bare hands and arms, and commanded him, under pain of death, to declare himself a Moslem. His only answer was, 'I am a Christian, my father was a Christian, my grandfather was a Christian, and, if you

should cut my head off, I shall die a Christian.' He was again severely beaten by the Bey and two soldiers, and then brought in chains to this city.

"Mr Ferrette came to Damascus and reported these facts to me. Abdu, the second son, accompanied him, and took refuge in my house. The mother, with her two other sons and daughter, soon followed. On the 15th inst., I drew up a statement of the facts, and presented it to our acting Consul, Mr Misk, requesting him to use all his influence to have Khalil liberated. Mr Misk at once saw the importance of the case, and forwarded my statement to the Pacha, accompanied by a protest against such an act of persecution. To this the Pacha has not as yet condescended to reply.

"Khalil, on being brought to Damascus, was at first committed to prison; but he was almost immediately taken to the barracks, enrolled as a soldier, and placed under close guard. At the hours of prayer he was dragged by force to the ranks, and ordered to join the others in their prostrations. He replied that he was a Christian. He was beaten, and even threatened with death; but his uniform answer was, 'I am a Christian, and I shall die a Christian.' On Saturday last, the 10th instant, Mr Ferrette met Khalil in the street, escorted by two soldiers. The young man complained bitterly of the treatment he had received, which he was able to do the more freely as the soldiers did not understand Arabic. Mr Ferrette walked with him until he arrived opposite the door of the British Consulate, and then said, 'If you wish to escape now is your time. Run into that house and you are safe.' Of course he took the hint, and Mr Misk at once received him under the protection of the British flag. His mother, brothers, and sisters, I sent to join him, and we wait with much anxiety for the result."

The great evil throughout the Turkish empire seems to be, that every governor of a province is a despot in his sphere, whose will is law, when that of the empire is against his prejudices or inclinations. It is this that is producing so much confusion and contradiction in the accounts given of the effects produced by the late edict of the Sultan, proclaiming religious liberty to all the subjects of his empire. A meeting of judges at Constantinople set a man free, who was brought before them as a criminal for becoming a Christian, declaring that every man is free, according to law, to follow the dictates of his conscience; while in this and the other provinces of the empire, the court, before whom such an individual is brought, orders him to be carried to prison, and his goods to be confiscated. Everything, and justice among the rest—or rather judgment from the professed tribunals of justice—has its price in this degraded empire, and is given to the highest bidder; or might and not right is the rule.

AYR PRESBYTERY.

On the 19th of October last, the congregation of Toberdony, Ireland, under the inspection of the Presbytery of Ayr, gave a unanimous call to the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, Thurso, to be their pastor. The Rev. John Robertson, Ayr, presided at the moderation.

On the 21st of the same month, the Presbytery met at Ballylaggan, and ordained Mr Andrew Anderson, preacher of the gospel, to the charge of the congregation of United Original Seceders, Ballylntagh, Ireland. The Rev. James Smellie, Stranraer, preached the ordination sermon; and the Rev. John Robertson, Ayr, after putting the questions of the Formula to Mr Anderson, offered up the ordination prayer, and afterwards addressed both pastor and people as to their respective duties.

At a meeting of the same Presbytery on the 24th November last, the Clerk laid upon the table and read, "Reasons by the Congregation of Toberdony for the Translation of the Rev. E Ritchie, Thurso, to Toberdony." The Presbytery instructed

the Clerk to transmit a copy of these reasons to the Clerk of the Perth and Aberdeen Presbytery, and agreed to refer the matter of the translation to the Synod, at its meeting in May next, and that the congregation of Toberdonny be instructed to appear, by commissioners, on their own behalf at said Synod.

At another meeting, held on the 20th January last, the Presbytery having had some conversation in reference to the important duty of public catechising, which they regret has of late years been neglected in most of the congregations under their inspection, and being convinced of the advantages, which, by the blessing of God, might accrue from its regular observance, agree to enjoin the ministers within their bounds to take steps, without delay, for the revival of this ancient and laudable practice; and the Presbytery would earnestly recommend to the congregations to strengthen the hands of the ministers in the performance of this work. The Presbytery further agreed that this minute be read from the pulpit on the first Sabbath of February, at the close of public worship.

COUPAR-ANGUS.

The fourth in the course of lectures in connection with the Mechanics' Institute in this place was delivered by our townsman, the Rev. Mr Barr, on the evening of Thursday last. Mr Barr took for his subject, "An Evening with the Reformers," and treated it in a masterly, popular, and instructive manner. He was listened to with deep attention and manifest approbation; and all seemed to feel that their evening with the Reformers was a very pleasing evening indeed. At the close of the lecture, the Chairman, the Rev. Mr Bain, observed that the subject chosen by Mr Barr was very appropriate, as he was connected with the same Church as that of which the elder Mc'Crrie was long a distinguished ornament—a man who had done more in defending the character, and throwing light on the lives of our Reformers, than any other in Scotland. Altogether, we were well pleased with the lecture, and could wish to have many more of the same kind.—*Dundee Warder*, January 14, 1858.

Obituary.

THE congregation of United Original Seceders, Birsay, has during the last month sustained a severe loss, in the removal by death of Hugh Miller, the venerated father of the Session. By this dispensation, the Church-above-the-Hill (one name given to the Original Secession meeting-house at Birsay by the people in its vicinity) has lost one of its solid pillars and finest ornaments. Entering the world in the year 1777, he lived and died in the humble hut in which he was born, about a gunshot from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. Though never out of Orkney in his life, and precluded by his situation from obtaining education, wealth, or the advantages which others in southern districts enjoy, yet, by the native strength of his mind and his untiring industry, he successfully grappled with all the great problems of the day, and had a minute and extensive acquaintance with all the political and ecclesiastical movements of the times, especially from the period of the French Revolution to the hour of his death; indeed he was esteemed by the Orcadians of North Pomona as a man of rare sagacity, vast extent of knowledge, singular clearness of views, and genuine Christian character. He possessed strong intellect, combined with mellow, mature grace. Slow, reflective in his mental cast, yet prompt and energetic in action—of the greatest firmness and decision in his adherence to divine truth, yet a decision blended with captivating sweetness and love—his conduct was a bright, luminous, consistent testimony to the power of vital godliness. He was a wise and prudent observer of the events of Providence, and saw a bow in every cloud. When called to deep wading in deep waters, he knew there was one who held the winds and waters in the hollow of His hand. The members of the congregation

above-the-Hill will long remember what a rich treat was in store for them when old Hugh was called on to lead the devotional exercises. Resting his body on one foot, with the other describing a half circle,* his hands and arms keeping corresponding motion—in a low tone of voice—with sublime ideas, and magnificent language—he prayed like one within the veil, or as one who beheld heaven open, and saw hell yawning at his feet. On his death-bed he sent his dying message to the congregation, by the hands of a loved and valued brother, who waited on him to the last. Among other things, he solemnly charged them—

1. That they prove faithful, unbending, and steadfast in adhering to, and contending for, the great principles of Scotland's Covenanted cause, as revealed in the Word of God, and contained in our subordinate standards; to do this with the more earnestness and zeal, as they are now the only congregation in the Orkney Isles cleaving to that cause, and God had signally owned and countenanced that cause in time past.

2. He charged them to abound in love one towards another—to permit nothing like estrangement, coldness, suspicion, or variance to mar the work of the Lord. He testified, from his own knowledge, that many leal-hearted friends of the Reformation had been scared from their posts by the unseemly heats and animosities that occurred in synods and congregations, and bade them remember that, when we were enemies, Christ died, giving a distinctive mark, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another," and that in heaven there would be the sweetest harmony, with most perfect love.

3. That they should never forget the many signal deliverances God had wrought for their congregation, enabling them to support ordinances under a pure judicial banner during many long years of poverty, bitter family and local opposition, many sore discouragements, and the almost total want of money, which has so long characterized Orkney; but in many trials God delivered them: therefore their deliverance should be remembered and left on record, that the children of every family, even those yet unborn, might learn the hardships their fathers in that congregation endured, and the kind interposition they experienced of a merciful Providence. By doing this they would resemble the Israelites, who took the twelve stones out of the midst of the sea, and erected them as a memorial.

4. That they should keep secure, and keep safe possession of the title-deeds of their property, saying, that after the late disruption in the Synod, when the elders were cited to Kirkwall anent that property, he, as sole surviving trustee, was the feeble instrument by which that property was secured to them—that he now on his death-bed left it in their hands for the sole and express purpose for which it was erected—desiring them also to be most careful, conscientious, and punctual, in supporting the temporal arrangements of the congregation.

Afterwards he engaged in a lengthened prayer, in which fervent supplication was made on behalf of his family—those with whom he was wont to worship—the Synod—the extension, unity, and purity of Christ's kingdom, and the downfall of anti-christian systems. Such a scene, such a death-bed, will ever be remembered by those who were privileged to witness it.

Good men of all denominations carried him to his grave, and made great lamentation over him. Not a cloud, not a speck rests on the humble, spiritual, mature, yet joyous saint, who in that lowly abode breathed out his soul into the hands of his Saviour. At his memory no one may cast a stone. "The righteous shall be held in everlasting remembrance." "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." "Yea, saith the Spirit, They are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them."

* It was our privilege once to join with Hugh Miller in prayer. The motion here referred to was observed; and, though it may seem extravagant and unseemly, in his case it was a graceful peculiarity, like the gentle impulsive wave of the hand in prayer—a movement unconsciously made in the fervour of devotional exercise, in which it was his privilege to be elevated, amidst ease, and calm, and power, above the range of ordinary attainment.—Ed. O. S. M.

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M A Y, 1858.

OUR SOCIAL MORALITY.

THE term Social Morality—once the boast of Britain—is at present calculated to bring the blush to every cheek. For a considerable time society has been startled by the perpetration of flagrant crimes among the educated and respectable classes. Revolting murders, perpetrated by friends or relatives, together with frauds and robberies, committed by the most unlikely persons, have met the public eye, and have led some to question our moral condition. But the most sagacious observers of the signs of the times seem to have had no conception of the extent to which our social morality has been undermined. There have been at times feeble warnings uttered from the pulpit and the press; but such were generally disregarded: while those who foretold the coming day of retribution were deemed misanthropic, or at least antiquated in their ideas regarding national progress. If special delinquencies were pointed out, or national guilt reproved, they were charged with the lack of Christian charity; and they were pointed, on the other hand, to that enlarged spirit of benevolence and philanthropy which finds embodiment in our modern missions, Sabbath schools, ragged schools, and reformatory institutions. They were told of what was being done for “the masses,” and thus society was hushed to repose in the lap of self-complacency, until, at home and abroad, the peaceful dream has been broken by the horrors of civil war in India, and a commercial crisis at home such as has never before been experienced.

We yield to none in the interest felt regarding our benevolent institutions; but their existence is an index of our moral state, while they are at the same time a testimony to our benevolence. Were the families constituting the substratum of society Christian families, there would be no necessity for Sabbath schools, as now constituted.

Were it not for the magnitude of our juvenile delinquency, nothing would have been heard of ragged schools and reformatory institutions. It is not so much the fact that society has become better, or more zealous in regard to the interests of the rising generation, but better acquainted both with its character and its dangers. There is felt to be a special necessity for the restraint of social evils, and moral means have been deemed the more efficient.

The disclosures of crime have constrained us to examine the moral condition of those whose poverty has made them accessible to the investigations of the police and the scrutiny of philanthropic agents. We have, in fact, been exploring the nether regions of society, and our discoveries have been such as to stimulate to energetic action. But it must not be forgotten that the middle and upper classes of society are yet unexplored. Were there a traveller like Livingstone, who could find access to all the tribes of these regions, and who could observe and record their manner of life and habits of business, there might be a volume written which would astonish the world more than even the discoveries of the great modern explorer. But these tribes are by position beyond the sphere of the philanthropist's acquaintance, and above the efforts of the reformatory associations. In their stately mansions a missionary, though he were an Apostle, would be deemed an intruder—a hint at reformation of life would be deemed an insult—a remonstrance regarding the religious training of the young would be met by a recital of the princely sums spent upon a fashionable education. The fact is, it is only when such parties, or their descendants, have sunk to the depths of moral degradation, that efforts are made to rescue them from eternal destruction.

Is this as it ought to be? If our missions are designed for the ungodly, they ought to be directed to all who sustain this character. There is not in the nature of things a prescriptive right to enter the house of the poor man, and inquire about his family, and to urge upon its members salvation, more than there is to enter the mansions of the rich, and warn them to flee from the wrath to come. You would warn a rich man as readily as a poor man if you saw his house on fire. You would drag the one as readily from the water as the other if in danger of drowning. Why not then manifest equal anxiety about the salvation of the soul?

The fact is, that wealth and respectability have become so much the British idol, that cushioned iniquity is concealed, if not respected, by the general community; while all freely unite to lay open the festering masses of corruption in what are termed the "sunken grades of society." We have heard much of late of the danger arising to the social fabric from the moral state of the degraded classes. Our national safety has been frequently urged as an argument for supporting benevolent institutions. In regard to those enjoying the caste of respectability, not a word has been uttered in reference to *their* moral state, and not a breath of suspicion to indicate the danger to society which exists in their immorality and disregard of obligation. Just as in India—we have been crying peace, peace, unwilling to believe that there could possibly arise danger to society from those classes

who were so actively employed in seeking the renovation of the vilest outcasts. But, like the dread mutiny of the Indian sepoy, it has come upon us as the thundering avalanche, spreading terror and desolation throughout our most flourishing cities. In the recent commercial panic, society has received a shock more terrific in its moral disclosures and effects than anything that could have resulted from the actual mutiny of the dissipated and degraded masses. In consequence of their position, there is a restraint upon both their physical and moral power; but when the middle and upper classes become tainted, the danger to society is rendered universal, and the ultimate results, in producing human misery, are beyond the power of the pen to portray. The poor man of the wynd may corrupt his neighbour by his example or his wiles, but ten thousand fold greater is the power of the man of wealth to corrupt society and entail misery upon his fellow-men. By letter, by telegraph, by travelling agency, he can transmit his immoral influence to distant cities and to distant kingdoms; while the poor, degraded wretch of the back-close is scarcely known beyond the precincts of his own court or common stair.

In regard to the immoral in humble life, it is no difficult matter for the middle and higher classes to avoid them; but what community is safe, what family is sacred, from the corrupting influence of men of apparent wealth, or of men holding public trusts, involving the interests of thousands, while such are destitute of integrity? The man who can keep his table replenished with wines, at the rate of hundreds per annum, will corrupt society to an extent that is literally impossible by the common but humble drunkard. The man who can keep a splendid mansion for "a friend," besides his town and country residence, at the expense of his creditors, will produce more victims of prostitution in a few years than the degraded libertine of the wynd will do in a life-time. He is, in fact, the seducer of those who ultimately descend to the common dens of iniquity, over which society laments. And yet he can occupy his place in the social scale, and find admission to the most virtuous families, either in his own station, or certainly in one a degree lower (if such there be), while the show of wealth can be kept up. It is not till he has robbed his creditors, and come before the sheriff as a bankrupt, that society turns against him. He is not a whit more morally culpable than he was before; but he can give no longer splendid entertainments, neither can he give nor accept fraudulent bills, to be discounted by reckless bankers. His plate, his carriage, and his livery servants disappear, and only then the world gets up the cry against him. He may have been known in his neighbourhood as a profaner of the Sabbath, as a "fast liver," and as a rash speculator. To not a few he may have been known as intemperate, as licentious, and as avaricious in his dealings; but while he manages to keep a carriage and to retain a large circle of fashionable friends, there is, as it were by mutual consent, silence regarding his real character. Nothing less than a commercial crisis smiting his fictitious wealth, and sending the pang of sorrow to many an honest heart, will turn the eyes of society upon him, or raise against him the cry of insulted humanity. Blame bankers as we may

(and they deserve it in terms such as have never yet been employed), society has itself to blame, because its standard of honour is no longer *moral worth*, but the amount of wealth possessed, or the appearances of luxury displayed by individuals.

Much has been said, and justly, regarding legal assessments for the poor, as destroying the spirit of independence, and producing paupers; but not less pernicious is the system of false credits, and the assumption of fashionable style, in destroying the real spirit of independence, and manufacturing bankrupts among the mercantile classes. It is therefore high time that public opinion should be brought to bear upon those dangers to the body politic, which, if not averted, must soon place us in the scale of declining, yea, of fallen nations.

It is in vain, however, to speak of public opinion as the corrective of those evils specified, unless public opinion were itself purified and rightly directed. We hold that public opinion is deeply implicated, if it be not one of the chief sources of the present commercial ruin. Is it not a fact that public opinion has for a long period laboured to subvert the basis of moral obligation? Has it not cherished those maxims and practices of pride and vain-glory which have necessarily led to the recent encroachments upon the principles of a sound morality? Public opinion has repudiated the continual obligation of our social oaths and bonds to God: need it be wondered at that men disregard their engagements to their fellow-men. As well might the architect attempt to raise a goodly structure without a foundation as society to erect a solid social superstructure without a sense of regard to the claims of God. He who fears not his Creator and Judge, will not long regard the bonds of obligation which bind him to his fellow-men.

The present course of Britain is identical with the apostacy of the Israelites during the periods of their covenant violation: hence, when Jerusalem became a heap, and the land of Judah a desolation, the reason assigned by the Spirit of God was, "Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which He made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt." The violation of their covenant was succeeded by almost every species of vice and immorality. Idolatry was substituted for the worship of the true God; robbery and oppression rendered bitter the social relations; fraud and deceit characterized their commercial transactions; the Sabbath was profaned, the ordinances of grace forsaken, and the offerings of God were wasted on their idolatry and their lusts; husbands and wives were marked by a disregard of the marriage covenant, while the bonds of affection between parents and children were completely severed or perverted. Murder, and adultery, and swearing, and lying, and stealing, caused the land to tremble. In proof of this, read the charges preferred against Israel by Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and most of the minor prophets. Only one or two passages can be introduced, as specimens of a multitude which might be quoted, showing the moral state of the Israelites during the period of their covenant violation. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the

land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. *Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish*" (Hosea, iv. 1-3.) These were the general features of Jewish morality during the course of backsliding and apostacy from God. But these immoralities were not confined to any one department of the social superstructure. The want of integrity was apparent in the most general as well as in the more peculiar relations of life. Then commercial morality kept pace with their religious retrogression. "Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the epha small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That ye may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; *yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?* The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein?" (Amos, viii. 4-8.) These are the characteristics of the Israelites which succeeded their violation of the holy covenant; but they are peculiarly applicable to Britain at the present day.

As a nation, she has rejected, nay, formally repudiated her covenant engagements. Her solemn bonds were consigned to the flames by the hands of the common executioner; and, during the persecuting period, to own the Covenants was treason, and to persist in avowing their continued obligation ensured a place on the scaffold or at the burning stake. It is true that the Revolution swept away the bloody house of the Stuarts, and established a more tolerant dynasty, by which liberty of conscience was guaranteed in matters of worship. But it is also true that there was no recognition of covenant obligation by the State; nor has public opinion, until the present day, ever indorsed the idea that the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland are under solemn oath to God. In fact, public opinion has been all on the other side; and society has not been slow to stamp as bigots those who would faithfully contend for the sole headship of Christ, and the continued obligation of our National Covenants.

It has thus been assumed that society can be unfaithful to God, and yet its members prove faithful and true to each other. But the mask is now thrown aside. The commercial convulsion which has recently occurred sheds light upon the moral character of these covenant-breaking lands. The description of the Israelites holds true to the letter, and those who cannot see the connection between our guilt and our punishment must be judicially blind.

Covenant violation has been succeeded in Britain, as in ancient Israel, by connection with idolatry, both in its heathen and anti-christian forms. Hindooism and Popery have been fostered and encouraged, not to speak of the worship of mammon, which is next to universal. Sabbath profanation, fraud, licentiousness, drunkenness, and murder, are now the sins of the land. We have extended our

territory, but we have carried our lusts and our practices into our distant colonies; consequently God is saying now to us, as to His ancient people, "Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house! . . . For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it. Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!" Is not this true of many of our foreign possessions? Hence, in regard to India, God seems to have been saying, as of old, "Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men. Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled, as Shalman spoiled Beth-arbel in the day of battle: the mother was dashed in pieces upon her children. So shall Bethel do unto you because of your great wickedness" (Hosea, x. 13-15). The tumult has arisen among the people—yea, even among those who stand to us in the relation of fellow-citizens, and in regard to whom, as a Christian nation, we are under solemn obligations. We feel indignation against the sepoys, who have taken and broken their oath of allegiance. Our ire is roused against the native princes because of the violation of treaties to which they were constrained to append their names in the season of defeat; but how little is thought of our oath of national allegiance to the King of kings, trampled in the dust, and treated with ignominy by all ranks in the land! While we are urging vengeance on the condemned sepoys, is not the Spirit of God saying to Britain, as he did to David, by Nathan, "Thou art the man!"

In like manner, while our indignation burns against those bankers who have betrayed their trust, and those merchants who have disregarded their obligations to pay their debts, we forget that the debt of national homage, in accordance with our Covenants, is still due, and that our guilt has been accumulating from generation to generation during the whole period of national backsliding. Were God to deal with us as we would deal with the mutineers and fraudulent bankrupts, judgments vastly heavier than any yet experienced would be our doom as a people.

Every one seems able to understand the import of a treaty by an Indian chief, and the obligations of a mercantile company to meet their promissory bills when legally due. How is it, then, that men cannot, or rather will not, see the continued obligation of a covenanted nation or church to God? We fear that there is a moral obliquity in reference to this subject, out of which the nation shall only be startled by some such retribution as has been measured out to India.

Until we are brought back, as a people, to see that the duties of the second table of the moral law are based upon those of the first table, there can be no sound morality nor permanent progress. It is utterly vain to suppose that legislative enactments can remedy our present commercial evils. Nothing can bind the hands when the conscience is not bound, and no legal measures can ensure the fulfilment of obligations between man and man, when there is an entire disregard of the obligations of men to God. If we are to realize a return of public

confidence, and the restoration of anything approaching to commercial prosperity, we must begin by the confession of national guilt, and by the renewal of our national and ecclesiastical engagements to God, the Moral Governor. We must learn that it is righteousness alone that exalteth a nation, while sin is a reproach to any people.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF DEPARTED SAINTS.

Rev. xiv. 13—"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

THERE are few things that ought to excite our wonder and gratitude more than the expense and pains at which God has been to administer comfort to His people and to the children of men in this world of sin and sorrow. He has not intrusted this work of love to creature-agency—not to the highest of those blessed spirits that stand in their primeval rectitude, and excel in glory and strength. It is His own Son—the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person—whom He has appointed, and anointed with the Holy Spirit, in all His fulness, to fulfil this part of His pleasure. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me," says the Messiah, "because the Lord hath anointed me . . . to comfort all that mourn." The Father and the Son have sent the Spirit for the same end. One great object of His mission is to be the Comforter of the people of God; and in this work He is constantly engaged.

Many words full of comfort the LORD had spoken to the fathers recorded in the Old Testament. Many words equally fraught with consolation were spoken by the Lord Jesus in the days of His flesh, and afterwards by His Apostles. But, in addition to all this, a voice is sent by Him proclaiming, from heaven, for the consolation of all true believers, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord," accompanied with a command that this should be written, as a permanent means of encouragement to such throughout all generations. "I heard," says John, "a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." These words are designed, and they are marvellously fitted, to be an antidote against the fear of death to the people of God, and against the sorrows with which survivors are liable to be filled when such are removed from this world. The comfort, however, with which they are fraught is not indiscriminate: it is restricted to a special class of persons. It is not said, "blessed are all the dead," or, "blessed are the dead in general." Many of the dead are not blessed: on the contrary, they are, and shall ever be, unspeakably miserable. Of all the dead, they who die in the Lord, and they only, are blessed.

But what is it to be in the Lord in the sense of the words here employed? It is not merely to be in Him as Creator and Preserver, in whom all men live, and move, and have their being. It is not merely to be in the Lord Jesus by external profession as the members

of the visible Church. Many are thus in the Lord Jesus Christ whom He does not now recognize as His people, and whom He will not acknowledge at the last day, but command to depart from Him as cursed. But those who are in the Lord, in the sense of the Spirit here, are created anew in the Lord Jesus. They are in Him as the fruitful branch is in the vine on which it grows. They are vitally united to Him. He lives in them and they abide in Him. The life that they live in the flesh, like Paul, they live by the faith of the Son of God ; and because He lives they shall live also.

It is not intended to enter on the consideration of the connection of the words of the Spirit in this passage as they stand in the prophecy, however interesting that is, but simply to state, and briefly illustrate, some of the reasons why the dead who die in the Lord are blessed.

1st, They are so because they have *lived* in the Lord. Had they not lived in Him, they could have had no works to follow them that could contribute in any way to their blessedness in the future state. The period during which some of the saved live in Christ is very short—of which the thief on the cross is an instance. But however short, it is deeply interesting ; and there are works of the utmost value and importance wrought by them during this period. It is, however, the high privilege of many of God's saints to live a number of years in Christ on this earth, walking with God in newness of life, and enjoying a blissful fellowship with all the persons of the Godhead. It is the privilege of some to be drawn savingly to Christ in the days of their youth, and to live to an advanced age in a state of blessed union to Him—replenished richly from His fulness, and rendered fruitful in every good work—growing in grace and in the knowledge of their divine Lord and Saviour—made the instruments of saving good to many, whom they shall have for a crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus, and honoured to commend the good ways of the Lord to others, not in word only, but also in a holy and consistent practice,—the fragrance of which is felt by those who are left behind them long after they themselves have gone the way of all the earth, the influence of their example being not unfrequently transmitted through successive generations. The memory of the just is thus blessed, and the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

2d, They are blessed because they have been *prepared* for this great change. All who are truly in the Lord are made ready for death in whatever way or at whatever time this may come to them, or in whatever circumstances it may find them. They are so, not only in respect of state—being pardoned and accepted in the Beloved : they also have been, and shall be, rendered meet for entering on the inheritance of the saints in light, by having their sanctification perfected. "Being confident," says Paul, "of this very thing, that He who hath begun a good work in you will perform" (finish or perfect) "it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 6).

This is not always done to the sensible comfort of the saints. They are sometimes left in darkness, but it is ever done in the Lord's own way ; and, in some cases, this is made remarkably manifest to themselves and to others, in the high measure in which the old man is

subdued and put off—the blissful brightness with which grace is made to shine—in the joy in God and His salvation with which they are filled, and in foretastes of heavenly peace and confidence with which their souls are stayed on the Lord according to His Word.

3d, They are blessed because of the *manner* in which death comes to them. To the eye of sense, death may, and does often, come to the righteous and to the wicked precisely in the same way. The same painful, lingering disease, or the same sudden calamity, may be the instrument of this to both alike. Those of whom the world was not worthy have had to meet death in some of the most terrible outward forms which the malice of the persecutors could devise. Yet how differently did death come to them, and does it come to the people of God, as seen by the eye of faith. To the one, as well as to the other, it is the coming of the Son of man. But as there is an unspeakable difference between His advent to the righteous and to the wicked at the last day, so is there as to this at death. At the last day He will come to be glorified in His saints, and admired of all them that believe. To them He will then come as the bridegroom, to bring home the bride on whom He has set His love—to whom He has marvellously manifested this, and whose heart He has won perfectly to Himself; but to the other He will then be revealed in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them, because they have not known God, nor obeyed the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And, in harmony with this, death comes to the people of God disarmed of its sting. By faith they see that they have no real evil to fear from it, and are sometimes enabled to ask, in triumph, when the last enemy makes its approach, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. xv. 55–57).

4th, They are blessed because death does *not separate them* from Christ. They “die in the Lord.” Death dissolves many very intimate and tender ties, but it has no power to break the bonds of that union which has been established between the Lord Jesus Christ and His people. It breaks the connection which subsists between men and all earthly things. It separates men from their earthly homes and possessions—from their nearest and dearest earthly friends and relations—yea, it separates their souls and their bodies; but it separates neither the one nor the other from their Divine Lord. The bodies of the saints go down to the grave, and are dissolved into dust; but still it is in Jesus that they sleep, as in beds of rest; and their souls were never before so much with Christ as they are from that hour forward. However near Him they lived before, it was but absence from the Lord compared with what it will henceforth be.

At death they are withdrawn from those means of grace and ordinances of divine worship in which, while on earth, they had their highest delight; but they are introduced to what is far better—the perfect worship of the temple above, and into the immediate glorious presence of Him whose gracious presence, as enjoyed in His holy in-

stitutions in His Church on earth, rendered these so full of attraction to them, and without which they would have seen "Ichabod" written upon them—"the glory is departed."

5th, They are blessed because of *what death separates them from*. They then rest from their labours—from all their toils, pains and sorrows of every kind.

So long as believers remain in this world, sin, the worst of ills, still cleaves to them; for "what man is he that liveth and sinneth not?" This enemy not only remains in them, but also prevails from time to time against them. The best of them have to confess that the evil that they would not, that they do. They have a conflict with sin within, and the world and Satan without, to maintain. Imperfection characterizes their highest attainments and their best actions. They do nothing as they ought, or even as they would. Hence it is that, with the Apostle, there is one thing which they need ever to be doing—"forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before," to press "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"—the mark of perfection which still lies high above them, and far beyond their reach. While here, too, body and spirit soon weary and flag in the service of God. When, on the wings of faith and love, they take their loftiest flight towards heaven, and reach their highest altitude, they have scarcely had time to say, with the disciples on the mount, "it is good for us to be here," when they find themselves descending rapidly back to the earth, and have anew to complain that their souls cleave to the dust. Here, too, they have frequently much bodily pain and mental anguish to endure. Their hearts are pierced through with many sorrows; they are wasted with pining sickness from day even to night; and the tenderest cords of their hearts are intensely affected, while they have to witness the sufferings of greatly beloved relatives and friends.

But to all these evils death puts a perpetual end in the experience of all who die in the Lord. At its separation from the body, the soul is cleansed from every stain of sin. The spirits of just men are then made perfect. Who can conceive the ecstatic emotions of delight and joy which the departed spirit of the saint of God feels when the burden of the body of death, under the weight of which it had so long groaned, has mysteriously vanished in a moment—when imperfection of every kind has left it for ever—when all warfare and conflict have come to a perpetual end, and an impregnable wall is beheld standing between him and all ills and enemies of every class—all sorrows being ended, and tears completely wiped from his eyes!

6th, They are blessed because of *what death brings them to*. It brings them to perfection of every kind. Then that which is perfect is come, and that which was in part is done away. Their state of childhood has passed, and that of manhood has come, in their being brought "to a perfect man; to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." They shall then no more see through a glass darkly, but face to face, and know even as also they are known. There their love to God, to holy angels, and to one another, shall be perfect; their wills

shall be swallowed up in the will of God, with which they shall ever be in perfect harmony. In short, they shall be perfect and entire, wanting nothing—seeing Christ as He is, they shall also be like Him.

Then, too, they shall be brought to perfection in enjoyment as well as in attainment. Their souls, however enlarged their capacity for enjoyment, shall be brimful of the highest and the purest blessedness. The eye shall be satisfied with seeing their Divine Lord as He is, and God in Him, and with seeing the works of God in all their number, magnitude, and varied character, both in creation and in providence, in the light of glory. Their souls shall be satisfied with the full enjoyment of God, of all His attributes and perfections, and of all the persons of the Godhead, together with a blissful enjoyment of all the excellent creatures of God. Their sun shall no more go down, neither shall their moon withdraw itself; but the Lord shall be their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning shall be ended.

They shall there also be brought to the highest honour. They are now the sons of God, but they are in their minority, and it doth not yet appear what they shall be. They shall then be crowned with glory—with a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory. They shall have their crown set on their head by no seraph, however high, but by the King of glory himself; and this honour shall be conferred on them in the presence of an assembled universe. They shall be arrayed in robes of light, in which they shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars, for ever and ever; and, being so arrayed and crowned, they shall be brought, with gladness great, and mirth on every side, into the palace of the King of kings, whose kingdom commands every thing that hath being; and, as the objects whom He delights to honour, they shall have a place assigned them on that throne on which He himself sits.

They will then know fully how profitable as well as honourable His service is, and that they have not, as they sometimes thought, laboured in vain, and spent their strength for nought and in vain; and they shall also be fully convinced that of all duty that of suffering and sacrifice for Christ is the most lucrative in which it is possible for any to be engaged. And it is but as for a moment compared with eternity, when their bodies, fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ, shall be raised up and admitted to a share of all this along with their immortal spirits.

9th, They are blessed because all that they are thus brought to at death shall be *eternal*. The assurance of this unspeakably enhances all. Though the utmost that any can possess or enjoy of earthly good were many thousand times greater and better than it is, it is rendered almost valueless by its transient nature or the momentary character of our enjoyment of it. But the glory and blessedness to which the redeemed are brought at death shall never see any end, interruption, or abatement for ever—all is eternal. And what is eternity? It far transcends our utmost conceptions. As many thousand years as there are blades of grass on the surface of the earth, or grains of sand along all the shores of the ocean, could not form the lowest fraction in an enumeration of the countless cycles of its immense duration.

Such is the state of perfect, unending blessedness on which those who die in the Lord enter at death. Surely, then, they are indeed blessed whose high privilege this is.

This subject shows very clearly, *first*, how little cause we have to mourn for the dead that die in the Lord on their account. May they not be heard saying to sorrowing survivors, as Jesus did to the women who followed him to Calvary, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." In as far as they are concerned, there is cause of joy. Our loss by their removal may be great; but their gain is unspeakable. The loss of their profitable society—of their example and prayers—of their varied influence and weight of character—may be deeply felt by those who survive. On this account we may be justly sorrowful. But who can fully conceive the heights from which they now look down on the highest attainments ever reached by themselves or any other on this earth.

This shows, in the *second* place, how great a privilege it is to be indeed in the Lord. This is assuredly the one thing needful, in comparison of which all else is but a shadow. There is no other way of being truly blessed, either in life or in death, in time or in eternity. Let all who would not be found at death in the condition of those who were without the ark when the flood came, or of the rich man in the parable, who, at his death, lifted up his eyes in hell, being in torments, seek now, above all things, to have their vital union to Christ made sure. Let them take heed not to leave this to be done till the night come, when no man can work. How sad will it be to be found in the condition of the foolish virgins, when the cry at midnight is heard, "Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."

This subject shows, *lastly*, the brightness of that future which opens on the people of God when they take their departure out of this world. Surely the day of their death is unspeakably better than the day of their birth. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." How meet is it that this should eclipse all earthly prospects to our view, and that our hearts should be in that heaven where all this awaits those who die in the Lord! How much cause have we to be ashamed that we associate happiness so much with the seen and the temporal, and so little with the unseen and the eternal! How earnest should we be to obtain power from the fulness of Christ, and, in answer to prayer, to evince the truth and vigour of our faith by expecting only a small measure of happiness on this side death; and, having our hearts and souls drawn forth in confident expectation and intense desire towards the blessedness which is realized in the experience of the people of God beyond death, of which the Spirit bears witness when he says, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord!"

SUBMISSION TO EVERY ORDINANCE OF MAN.

1 Peter, ii. 13, 14—"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake : whether it be to the king, as supreme ; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well."

BECAUSE the early Christians acknowledged Christ as their King, their adversaries represented them as persons who were disaffected to the civil government under which they lived, and as enemies to the State. The Jews were long under a theocracy or divine government, and therefore entertained great prejudices against heathen or foreign governments ; and as these Christians to whom the Apostle Peter is writing were of Jewish extraction, they probably had imbibed many of the prejudices of their ancestors. He therefore exhorts them in this manner, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." That civil government is here called an ordinance of man is evident from the explanation which the Apostle subjoins, "whether it be to the king, as supreme ; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him." But that which is here said to be an ordinance of man is elsewhere called the ordinance of God. Thus in the Epistle to the Romans, xiii. 1, 2, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God : the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth *the ordinance of God.*" Between the Apostles Peter and Paul there is no contrariety or contradiction in terms. Civil government is in one sense what Paul declares it to be, "the ordinance of God ;" in another, it is according to the expression of Peter, "an ordinance of man."

1. Civil government is the ordinance of God. It is the ordinance of God as Creator and the God of providence. It necessarily arises out of the relations which He has established among men, and the circumstances in which He has placed us. Our natural wants, our mutual dependence, our diversity of talents and gifts, and our social nature are all from Him, and shut up men to the necessity of having some form of civil government among them. Men could not long exist on the earth without dwelling together in the same habitation, village, town, or country. But they could not live thus together without some bond of union among them, or their being subject to some common laws. But they could not be subject to these laws, unless society, or some fit persons, were invested with authority to enforce the observance of them. In other words, society could not exist without civil government. Without this, we should be as the fishes of the sea, which have no ruler over them, so that the strong prey upon the weak. It is therefore the ordinance of God, who has made us what we are. If it cannot be said that men are instinctively taught civil government, like the bees, it may nevertheless be truly affirmed, that the necessity of civil government is dictated by the light of nature. Hence the most barbarous tribes have always been found to have some order and subordination among them.

On the other hand, it is also an ordinance of man. First, Because

God has left it to men themselves to determine, according to circumstances, what particular form of civil government they shall have. Second, Because the consent of human society is necessary, in all ordinary cases, to the setting up of any particular form of civil government among men. To these we may add a third reason. It is called an ordinance of man, in distinction from ecclesiastical government, or the government of the Church, which is out and out the ordinance of God, and can neither be altered nor moulded according to the will of man.

The Apostle here uses a universal expression, "every ordinance of man," to include the various forms of civil government which men may deem it expedient to erect, either in different nations, or in the same nation at different times, whether the form of government which they adopt be monarchy, in which the supreme power is placed in the hands of one individual; or an oligarchy or aristocracy, in which that power is lodged in a few; or a democracy or republic, in which a nation, by its delegates and representatives, makes and executes the laws; or a mixed monarchy composed of the former three, like the British Constitution, consisting of a supreme ruler, House of Lords, and House of Commons. This expression, "every ordinance of man," includes not only the various forms of civil government under which nations exist, but also the several orders of governors, supreme and subordinate, to whom the management of public affairs is entrusted. Hence the Apostle adds, in explanation, "whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him."

Insubordination to the lawful exercise of civil authority bespeaks a person to be under the dominion of fleshly lusts. This appears from the language of Peter in his second Epistle, ii. 10, "But chiefly they that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities;" and from the parallel passage in Jude, verse 8, "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." Strange, therefore, as it may seem, the injunction to "submit ourselves to every ordinance of man" is only a branch of the exhortations which precede it—"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

This duty of submission to every ordinance of man includes our recognizing and acknowledging the civil government established in the country in which we reside or to which we belong—our subjection to all the lawful exercise of authority, both by obedience to all just laws, and by suffering penalties incurred for the violation of them. "For," said Paul, "if I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cesar;"—and our affording to it all the encouragement and support in our power, in all things lawful; for example, by the payment of tribute,

by our good and orderly conduct, by our prayers, and, if necessary, by defensive arms. "Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried captive, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof ye shall have peace." "Render therefore unto all their due: custom to whom custom is due; tribute to whom tribute; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

Submission to every ordinance of man is enforced by this argument, "for the Lord's sake." Though the term "Lord" is frequently applied in Scripture to each of the three Divine persons to express their essential greatness, sovereignty, and dominion, yet it is one of Christ's mediatorial titles, and denotes His gracious dominion over His people, and His official authority over all things for their sakes. It is therefore properly understood as applicable to Him when any blessing is asked for the Lord's sake, as in the prayer, "Make thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary, which is desolate, for the Lord's sake," and when any duty is enjoined, as in the instance before us, "for the Lord's sake." Believers are under the moral law as the rule of their life, in the hand of Christ, as their Lord, and no obedience to it is acceptable to Him unless it be performed for His sake. To submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord Christ's sake, is to do so out of love to Him for the great things which He has done for us; firm regard to His authority in the fifth commandment, which requires the maintaining the honour, and performing the duties belonging to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, and equals—in the exhortations addressed to us by His Apostles, and in His own memorable words uttered by His own lips, "Render unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and unto God the things which are God's;" from respect also to His example, who, by His own conduct, has taught us to submit to every ordinance of man, by His being subject to His parents, His payment of tribute, and His subjection to the Roman government; and from the consideration that, while civil government was and is, and shall be till the end, under the essential dominion of a three-one God for all its natural ends, because of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things, it has also been put under Christ, as Mediator, for supernatural ends; and His people, by their dutiful subjection to it, hasten forward the time when all the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, in obedience to these solemn injunctions, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling."

At the same time that submission is enforced by the highest motive "for the Lord's sake," this expression serves to throw light on the nature of that subjection which is due to civil rulers. It is plain that when we are enjoined to submit ourselves for the Lord's sake, the Apostle is referring to the lawful exercise of civil authority, to which we are bound to yield a cheerful and conscientious subjection; and it is no less clear, that no submission is due when it cannot be given for the Lord's sake. Now, not to speak of tyrants and usurpers, whose government is no ordinance either of God or man, and to whom no subjection or obedience is due, there are instances in which we

cannot submit for the Lord's sake to the exercise even of lawful civil authority. When civil rulers enjoin anything which is in itself sinful, as when Nebuchadnezzar made a decree that all people, nations, and languages, in his dominions, should worship the golden image which he had set up in the plains of Dura, and when Darius, with the consent of his princes, decreed that no man should ask a petition of any god or man, for the space of thirty days, save of the king only,—in all such instances, in which anything sinful is enjoined, we must obey God rather than man.

Different orders of civil rulers, to whom Christians ought to submit themselves for the Lord's sake, are mentioned by the Apostle in these words, "Whether it be unto the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him." He illustrates the duty of submission, by referring to that particular form of government under which those Christians lived to whom he is writing. Almost the whole world was at that time under the imperial government of Rome. The Apostle therefore, first of all, exhorts them to submit themselves to the king or emperor. The king is here said to be "supreme"—not as if his will were the supreme law, or as if there was none higher to whom both he and we are accountable; for "if thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perversion of justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they;" nor as if he were supreme in all causes, for the ordering and administering of the affairs of the Church do not belong to him at all, but to those office-bearers of the Church to whom Christ has committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and it was the king's assumption of such unwarrantable authority as to be supreme in all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil, which laid the foundation of the late dreadful persecution in our own country. But he is said to be supreme because he is the highest earthly magistrate in all civil causes, so that in such matters there is no authority on earth higher than his, notwithstanding the pretensions of the man of sin. Since, in an extensive empire or kingdom, the king cannot, in person, manage every thing which relates to government and laws, it is necessary that inferior magistrates and judges be appointed by him to act in his name. Now, the Apostle enjoins equal submission to those in all things lawful, as to the king himself, "or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him."

Having enforced submission to civil authority for the Lord's sake, the Apostle urges it from the utility, excellence, and special design of the office of magistrates. They are sent "for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well." The immediate ends of magistracy, in subordination to the glory of God, are, first, "For the punishment of evil-doers." Those who are deserving of punishment from the magistrate or civil ruler are here denominated "evil-doers." The word is very expressive, and it almost explains itself. It doubtless denotes persons who, by their principles or practice, do manifest injury to their neighbours, to the lawful institutions of a nation, and to the best interests of the community. Hence the gross violation of the first, as well as of the second

table of the Divine law are evil deeds, and deserving of punishment by the magistrate: for example, blasphemy, open idolatry, profane swearing, and Sabbath breaking. Let none object, that to punish these as civil crimes is to compel men to be religious, for it is only to hinder them from trampling on the religion of their neighbours. Let none say, this is persecution, or an invasion of men's natural rights; for who gave men a natural right to vilify God and revile them that fear him? The punishment of evil-doers supposes the infliction of some kind and measure of suffering proportionate to the nature of the offence committed. The infliction of this punishment is intended, not merely for the advantage of the offender, but also for the protection of the good, or such as do well; and it must be awarded by the magistrate, and not by private individuals. Secondly, "For the praise of them that do well." They that do well are the very opposite of evil-doers. They are good and peaceable subjects, who do not hold principles and follow practices hurtful to civil society, but whose principles and conduct are in accordance with the moral law and the unerring Word of God, and therefore conducive to the welfare of the community. As it is the duty of the magistrate to punish the former, so also to praise and reward the latter; and as there are many ways in which he may punish evil-doers—as by excluding them from places of power and trust in the State, by fine, imprisonment, banishment, and, in some instances, by death, according to that original and immutable law, "Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man"—so there are many things which he may do for the praise of them that do well: for example, he may and he ought to extend to them the arm of his protection—to countenance and encourage them in well-doing—to honour them by raising them to places of power and trust, and, if need be, to provide for their maintenance out of the public treasury.

You will thus perceive that civil rulers, without going beyond their sphere, and simply by confining themselves within the line of their office for the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well, greatly benefit the true religion, and promote the welfare of the Church; and that it is both the duty and the interest of the magistrate to encourage true religion, which enjoins all who profess it to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, and tends, as it is intended, to diminish the number of evil-doers, and to increase the ranks of them that do well. It is, indeed, as much for the advantage of a nation and its rulers to befriend and support the true religion and the Church as it is for the inhabitants of a town to take care of the well which affords to them a continual and an abundant supply of good and wholesome water.

How much soever a nation favoured with the Word of God may fail of their duty to Him in not taking advantage of His Word, and making use of it to enable them to provide from among themselves rulers who are men of truth, fearing God and hating covetousness, and whatever deviations from the immediate ends of their office, which are specified by the Apostle Peter, civil rulers may be chargeable with in any particular acts of government—as, for instance, in putting some evil-doers on a level with them that do well, and showing, at times,

even more favour for some of the former than of the latter—yet, unless they degenerate from being the ordinance of God, by ceasing to be the ordinance of man, and thus become thorough tyrants and persecutors, who reverse the ends of civil authority, by being a terror to them that do well, and a praise to evil-doers, submission is still due to them for the Lord's sake, after the example of the prophets and the people of God, who yielded a limited allegiance and subjection to the idolatrous and wicked kings of Israel. Such are the views entertained by Rutherford, and expressed by him in *Lex, Rex*, pp. 58, 59, under the question—"Whether or no the people make a person their king conditionally or absolutely? and whether there be such a thing as a covenant tying the king no less than his subjects?" His words are—"The states who made Saul king might lawfully dethrone him, and anoint David their king. But David had reason to hold him for his prince and the Lord's anointed so long as the people recalled not their grant of royal dignity; as David, or any man, is obliged to honour him as king whom the people maketh king, though he were a bloodier and more tyrannous man than Saul. Any tyrant standeth *in titulo* (in possession of his title of king) so long as the people and estates who made him king have not recalled their grant; so as neither David, nor any single man, though six hundred with him, may unking him or detract obedience from him as king; so many acts of disloyalty and breaches of laws in the subjects, though they be contrary to this covenant that the states make with their prince, doth not make them to be no subjects, and the covenant mutual standeth thus."

The sum of what we have said is, that civil government is both the ordinance of God and the ordinance of man—that it is only in things lawful that obedience is due to civil rulers acting within the line of their office—that all who make a profession of the name of Christ, whether they be in public or in private station in the Church, are bound by the Word of God to submit to the lawful exercise of civil authority, even though magistrates be heathen, or enemies in their hearts to the true religion. This is also the doctrine of the Westminster Confession of Faith—"Infidelity or difference of religion doth not make void the magistrate's just and lawful authority"—that submission is no less due to inferior magistrates, in their stations, than to the supreme civil ruler in his place—that true religion is the best support of civil government, and that civil rulers, by the punishment of evil-doers, and the rewarding of them that do well, contribute greatly to promote the true religion and the welfare of the Church.

This subject involves the difference, on the nature of civil government, between two denominations of Christians at the present time, who are otherwise very much of the same mind in their public profession. I refer to the Reformed Presbyterians and the Original Seceders. The difference between them, in reference to civil government, turns on a single point, and may be reduced to one word. The former affirm that a certain measure of scriptural qualifications is essential to the *being* of lawful magistracy in a Christian country; the latter assert that a certain measure of scriptural qualifications is essential to the *well-being* of a lawful magistracy in a Christian country. The former say, "to the being;" the latter, "to the well-being."

How desirable that both these denominations were brought to see eye to eye in this matter, who are so much at one in other respects. Both are agreed as to what are the scriptural qualifications of civil rulers, and also as to what are our national defections, in Church and State, from the Covenanted Reformation of Britain and Ireland. Both acknowledge the obligation of our National Covenants on posterity, and the same national sins as violations of these Covenants. But while we, as seceders, deplore our national defections from former attainments in reformation, and earnestly desire to see a religious and scriptural reformation in the State, we dare not refuse to acknowledge the lawfulness of the present civil government, and dare not withhold conscientious subjection to it in all things lawful, in the face of such divine injunctions as these—"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well." It is our fervent prayer that, wherein our brethren are otherwise minded, the Lord may reveal even this unto them, and that He may give unto them and us "one heart, and one way, that we may fear Him, for the good of us, and of our children after us."

In fine, let our submission to every ordinance of man be an evidence of our subjection to Christ as our Lord. If it is our duty to submit to the king, as supreme, and to governors sent by him, for the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well, how much more incumbent is it for us to submit to the Most High, and to His only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he has sent? The Father has appointed Him King upon His holy hill of Zion; He has given Him to be our Saviour, and has commanded us to believe on Him whom He hath sent—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." He who is the Saviour of sinners is also the Judge of all. At the great day, Christ will appear for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. He will come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired by all them that believe. He will be revealed in flaming fire, with His mighty angels, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. In that day, He will render to every one according to his works. To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, He will render everlasting life. But unto them who are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, tribulation and wrath, indignation and anguish, on every soul of man that doeth evil, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for there is no respect of persons with God. O, what will it avail you though you are now subject to earthly rulers, if you do not submit yourselves to Christ as your King and Lord! Receive Him in all His offices—as your Prophet, Priest, and King. Kiss ye the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way; for if once His wrath is kindled but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in Him. His language to all unbelievers and impenitent sinners will be, "But these mine enemies, that would not that I should reign over them, bring forth, and slay them before me."

ON LOVE TO THE BRETHREN.

THE whole law is summed up in love—love to God, and love to our neighbour. Thus spake the Divine Master, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” And as the Master enjoined, so the disciple taught—“And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.” The term charity, in the scripture sense of it, is the same as love, as that term is employed to denote that supernatural principle of love to God and our neighbour which is produced in the soul by the saving operations of the Divine Spirit. It is evident that love to the brethren is principally intended in the apostolic injunction now quoted: it is charity among themselves. In explaining the description given of it, its nature may be first briefly considered; then the eminent degree of it which is required of Christians to one another; its excellent fruit; and lastly, the reason why it is to be sought above all things.

In regard to the *nature* of Christian charity, it is plain that it is not a natural, but a supernatural affection: it is different from natural affection. This latter is wholly absorbed in self—self-interest or self-gratification: natural affection is a love to others for our own, or, at most, for their own sake; but that charity recommended by the Apostle is a love, esteem, or regard, to one another for God's sake. Now, since it is a love to one another for God's sake, it must be intimately connected with love to God. We cannot love men for God's sake, until we first love God Himself with a supreme love; but supreme love to God is not a natural, but a supernatural principle. “The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Our hearts must be regenerated by the grace of God, before we can love the Lord with all our heart and soul; and until this principle of love to God be implanted, we cannot love one another for God's sake; but when once this principle is implanted, and becomes the reigning principle in the soul, then we will love our fellow-creatures for His sake, and in proportion to the relation in which they stand, or the resemblance they bear to Him. Accordingly, the love to the brethren inculcated by the Apostle is not in its nature distinct from love to God: it is only different in its degrees. God claims the supreme place in our hearts and affections. He commands our affections to centre in Him as their chief good, just as the beams of the sun centre in the sun himself; but as these beams diffuse themselves from their source and centre, so as to extend their light and heat to other bodies, so God does not only allow, but He expressly enjoins us to diffuse that love which is to centre in Himself to His creatures, in proportion to the relation they bear to Him, as its supreme object. Hence says the beloved disciple, “And this commandment we have from Him, That He who loveth God, loves his brother also.”

Again, as Christian charity has God for its supreme object, so it

diffuses itself wherever God's image and God's love are diffused. Supreme love to God regulates our affections to other things: it teaches us what proportion of love or regard we ought to bestow on inferior objects. It teaches us not only to refuse to love what God has forbidden, and to choose those things which God allows us to love, but to assign to each of them a degree of our affection, which in some measure corresponds to the degree of affection God Himself has assigned them.

Christian charity or love, considered as a stream issuing from the heart, empties itself in God as the ocean of love, and thence diffuses itself wherever God's love diffuses itself. As God's love of common benevolence extends even to the wicked, as creatures, though He hates their sins, and as they also share of His common beneficence, so, according to our Lord's precept, we are to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them that spitefully use us and persecute us, that we may be the children of our Father who is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and He sendeth rain on the just and unjust. God has declared in His Word, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways and live?" We should earnestly desire and fervently pray for the salvation even of our greatest enemies. Paul was hated and persecuted by his countrymen; yet he tells us that his heart's desire and prayer for Israel was, that they might be saved. But as God only loves those with a love of complacency who bear the image of His moral perfections, so the believer's complacential love is confined to them; and His degree of affection to, and esteem for them, will be in proportion to their degree of conformity to the moral image of God. With such they delight to associate, and they make them their companions. As the light and heat emitted from the sun gradually decline in proportion to their distance from the body of the sun, so this charity, as it terminates on the creatures, declines or becomes more feeble, in proportion as the creatures begin to lose their resemblance to the great Creator. Such of mankind as are renewed, after the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, have the next place in the Christian affection to God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, because they resemble God most. And such of the rational creation as have only the natural image of God, and are destitute of his moral image, possess an inferior degree of their regard, because they bear an inferior degree of resemblance to God, the supreme object of this love; so that charity, while it hath God for its supreme object, diffuses itself among mankind, wherever God's love and God's image are diffused. And as the saints are the objects of God's special regard, and as they bear His moral image, so they are the objects of the Christian's special love and regard. He wishes well to mankind in general, and, so far as it is in his power, he will do them good; but then the saints are the objects both of His love, of benevolence, and beneficence in an especial manner. They have the first claim on both, and their claims merit His principal attention. Thus says the Apostle, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

Farther, as Christian charity is regulated, in regard to its objects, by the relation they stand in, and the resemblance they bear to God, its supreme object, so it is strengthened and promoted among Christians themselves, by the intimate relation they stand in to one another. While the law of God inculcates universal benevolence, it also requires that our benevolence and beneficence should correspond, in their degrees, to the nature of that relation in which we stand to one another. The more closely we are connected in civil life, the obligations we are under to love one another, and promote one another's best interests, is the greater. A man's obligations in this respect are certainly greater to the members of his own family than to those who only stand in the relation to him of neighbours or countrymen; while the obligations he is under to wish well to, and promote the good of his neighbours and countrymen, who live under the same laws and government, are certainly stronger and more extensive than his obligations to people of other nations. But Christians are united to one another by closer ties than those which unite families or civil societies. These are only natural, but those are supernatural. A higher kind and degree of affection are therefore due from Christian brethren to one another than to those with whom they are only connected by some civil tie. They are by profession, and, if they are not hypocritical in that profession, they are, in truth and reality, members of the same body mystical, of whom Christ is the head. They have one spirit, even as they are called, and one hope of their calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, through all, and in them all. Now, since they are united to one another by so many supernatural ties, they are bound in the strongest manner to unite in heart and affection. Hence the injunctions, "Let brotherly love continue;" "Above all things have fervent charity among yourselves."

Moreover, Christian charity, as it terminates on the brethren, as well as on God, is an operative principle. It is a source of new obedience. Hence we read of the fruits of faith and the labour of love; and love is said to be the fulfilling of the law. It is perpetually moving towards God, and diffusing its benignant influences among men, especially such as are of the household of faith. When it prevails in the heart of those who have this world's good, it will influence them to contribute cheerfully of their worldly substance for the support of their poorer brethren. "Whoso," says the Apostle, "hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" It also influences the Christian to exert himself for the advancement of his neighbour's spiritual interests, by being often engaged in prayer on his behalf, and by endeavouring, both by precept and example, to recommend religion to his attention and esteem, and to provoke him to love and good works. In an especial manner, Christian charity will operate in leading the Christian to bear his brother's infirmities, and to cultivate a spirit of forbearance and forgiveness towards his neighbour, according to the express declaration of the Apostle—"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."

Let us consider, now, the eminent degree of this grace which is here required of Christians to one another. This is intimated by the term *fervent*. "*Have fervent charity among yourselves.*" Fervency or zeal is opposed to lukewarmness or indifference. It is frequently recommended in the duties of religion as a quality or state of the mind absolutely necessary to render our services well pleasing to God. God is a spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. He requires that the heart and all the powers of the mind be stirred up to gracious activity in His service; that we be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. It is also required that our attachment to our brethren be warm and sincere, and that we be active and diligent in the performance of the duties we owe to them in the several stations and relations in which they stand to us.

More particularly, it is required that our love to one another be not a mere negative affection, or simply not willing or wishing evil to our brethren, but, positive, or an ardent desire that they may be blessed with all good. To wish evil to no man is certainly commendable; but we may be of this temper, and yet fall far short of our duty. This is not a positive love, such as the law of God requires, which enjoins us to love our neighbours with equal sincerity as ourselves. That love to our neighbour, enjoined by the second table of the law, is a positive regard. It takes a deep interest in our neighbour's welfare, both in a temporal and spiritual respect. They who have fervent charity among themselves seek not every one their own things, but every man also the things of others. They study, every one of them, to please his neighbour for his good to edification.

It is farther required here that our love, when it is in our power, be active and operative. This charity, as has already been noticed, is an operative and energetic principle. It is a fire that will not be smothered: it will emit its light and heat in some way or other; and, where fervent love to the brethren prevails in the heart, it will not be at a loss to find some channel in which to convey its benign influences to its objects. If its possessor be so poor that he cannot minister to the temporal necessities of his brethren, he may assist them with his best advice; or if they should surpass him, not only in worldly affluence, but in knowledge, he can make mention of them in his prayers at the throne of grace. The truth is, that where there is fervent charity in the heart, it will be operative in some channel or other in the life.

Let us observe, now, the *excellent fruit* of this charity mentioned by the Apostle. *Charity shall cover the multitude of sins.* The expression is borrowed from the aphorism of the wise man—"Hatred stirreth up strifes; but love covereth all sins." It is there mentioned as a main act of love. It delights not in an undue disclosing of our brethren's failings: it doth not eye them rigidly, nor expose them willingly to the view of others. Now, this is mentioned by the Apostle as a commendation of charity. It is a property belonging to it which makes it constantly and generally useful, so long as Christians are in this imperfect state. There is not a man living who doeth good, and

sinneth not. In many things we offend all. Now, since sinful infirmities and weaknesses cleave even to the best of God's people, where is the man that stands not in need of this charity to be exercised towards himself? If none, why are there any that deny it to others? There can be no society, no Christian, nor Christian intercourse without it. As it is commendable on account of its necessity and expediency, so it recommends itself to the esteem of the great and good by its disinterested ingenuity. It is the bias of the basest and most unworthy minds to be constantly occupied in the search and discovery of other men's failings and infirmities, while they pass by all that is commendable and imitable about them. Like certain flies, they pass over the sound parts, and fix upon a person's sores. But the true Christian is of a more noble spirit. He loves not unnecessarily to touch nor even to look upon them; but rather turns away from them. He never uncovers his brother's sores but with the view of curing them; and it will be his great concern to expose them to others no farther than is necessary for this purpose.

At the same time, it is carefully to be observed that the exercise of Christian charity does not preclude, *first*, secret reproof, when necessary. While the true Christian does not wish to expose the sinful infirmities of others, he is in duty bound to endeavour their removal; but the first step to this end is the conviction of the person who is in the wrong, by telling him his faults. The person who acts under the influence of this charity will study to execute this office as secretly as possible. But execute it he must; for to suffer sin upon our brother, without warning him of his danger, is not charity, but a most flagrant breach of it: it is the greatest act of cruelty we can commit against him, since it exposes his best interests to the most imminent danger. Hence the injunction, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him."

Nor, *secondly*, does this exercise of charity preclude the judicial trial of scandalous offences, or the discovery of them, so as to bring them under due censure. If an offence be of a private character, then the law of Christ and the dictates of charity forbid that it should be made public, until every means be used by the offended to reclaim the offender by himself. If he succeeds, then the matter must be for ever buried; if not, rather than suffer his brother to lie in sin, it must be discovered to one or two more; if they do not succeed, it must be told publicly to the church. Still, the person who in this way brings offences or sins, which at first were private, to public view, is not chargeable with a breach of Christian charity, since he tried every means, without effect, to extract the canker out of his neighbour's sore without laying it open. It was therefore an act of charity—not a breach of it—rather to lay it open to public view, than to cover it up while the canker remained, which might eventually ruin his best interests, and sink his soul in perdition: nor can the inflicting of public censures upon persons guilty of public offences, be accounted a breach of Christian charity, since the censures of the Church, from the least to the greatest of them, are intended for the destruction of the flesh,

that the spirit may be saved in the day of Jesus. Now, to spare the flesh by withholding the means for its destruction, to the endangering of the spirit's eternal salvation, must be a grievous breach; not an approved act of charity.

But more particularly and positively, charity covers sins, first of all, by putting the most favourable constructions upon those actions of a brother which may appear doubtful. Those who can deliberately condemn the actions of their neighbours, which are not undeniably evil, without knowing their particular circumstances, if not destitute, are at least chargeable with a breach of Christian charity. In all doubtful cases, the true Christian, who acts under the influence of this charity, will view the actions in every possible way before he pass judgment, in order that he may put the most favourable construction upon them. When it is evident that sin has been committed, then Christian charity will consider what may be palliating in its commission. It will lead the Christian to consider the temptations to which his offending brother may have been exposed; and, unless he has the clearest evidence to the contrary, he will be inclined rather to impute it to his ignorance than to the wickedness of his heart. He will be ready to apologise for him, as our Lord did for the Jews, when he said, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

When the law of Christ requires that private reproofs or public censures should be administered, still these will be accompanied with the healing balsam of charity: if it is such a sore as must not be allowed to be covered, lest it prove deadly, still charity requires that the uncovering of it should be in order to effect a cure, and that as soon as the cure is effected, that it should be again covered; or, in other words, that our brother's offence, when he has given satisfaction, should not only be forgiven, but forgotten by us. Thus speaks the Apostle to the Galatians, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." However much we ourselves may be injured by the offence committed, as soon as our brother is reclaimed, charity requires of us, that it should be as though it had never been. This is required, not merely for a first or second offence, but for any supposable number. To pass over a first is the way to pass over a second; for the more conquests charity obtains over the selfish passions, the more vigorous and predominant it will become in the soul, and the more capable of obtaining similar conquests. It is a token of weakness to resent injuries, in so far as the vindication of our own moral character, the benefit of the offender, and the public good are not concerned; but it is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression.

But the question may now be asked, *Why is this charity to be cultivated above all things?* We are not to suppose that brotherly love is here inculcated in preference to love to God. No; it springs from this love; but, this excepted, it is to be sought above all things, for, *first*, without it we are unfit for any religious duty. It will appear obvious to all that, without love to God, we cannot worship Him in an acceptable manner; for all the first table of the law, which respects

our duty to God, is summed up in love to God. But we have seen that love to God and our neighbours, especially to our Christian brethren, are inseparable. They are so connected, that if we hate the one we cannot love the other (1 John, iv. 20). Hence charity towards our neighbour is inculcated, as a qualification no less necessary in the service of God than love to God himself (Matt., v. 23-25). Without this, we cannot pray or perform any religious duty without pouring contempt upon God, and accumulating guilt to ourselves. We are taught in our prayers to say, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors;" but the man who addresses this petition to God's throne, with malice or ill will to his neighbour in his heart, prays for his own condemnation, since he prays that God would deal with him as he deals with his neighbour. Our Lord has assured us, that if we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our Father who is in heaven forgive us our trespasses.

But this leads to the observation that, without this charity, we are equally unqualified for performing the duties of morality enjoined by the second table of the law. For the illustration of this remark, it is sufficient to refer to the emphatic language of the Apostle, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing," &c.

Charity ought to be sought above all things, because the grand design of the whole scheme of redemption was, not only to unite sinners to God in love, but also to unite them in love and affection to one another. When sin created division between God and man, it also sowed discord among brethren. Of this fact, a striking example was presented, at an early period, in the case of Cain, who slew his brother. This was the work of the devil; and all who endeavour to promote and cherish discord among brethren, or who make a practice of blowing the flame of contention between brethren, wherever it happens to break out, bear his image. Christ came to destroy the works of the devil. He came, not only to slay the enmity of the heart against God, but to unite men of all descriptions, whom sin had alienated from one another, in the bonds of love and peace. Hence the reasoning of the Apostle, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, ii. 13, 14, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us," &c.

In short, Christian brethren should, above all things, have charity among themselves, because charity or brotherly love is the badge of Christianity. It is one leading mark by which every Christian is to try himself, whether he be among the genuine followers of Christ or not. If he loves the brethren, he is passed from death unto life; if he does not, he abideth in death. It is also the badge of distinction

by which true Christians are to be known from others by the world around them. "By this," says Christ, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." How earnestly, therefore, ought it to be sought, and how habitually should it be cherished and manifested by all the friends of Jesus?

THE FERGUSON BEQUEST DEBT-LIQUIDATION SCHEME.

Most of our readers are well aware of the offer which has recently been made to the Committee of Synod by the trustees of the late Mr Ferguson of Cairnbrock. A sum of £500 is offered to us, if we raise, first of all, £600 to meet it, and so form a central fund of £1100, out of which the congregations will receive in proportion to their need, so that all the debt on our different congregations may be cleared off in three years. The sum of £500 is about one-sixth of the debt, and we have heard murmurings in some quarters at the smallness of the proportion, and predictions of failure on our part if we attempt to implement the conditions on which the grant is offered. Now, of course our friends who take this desponding view can easily secure the fulfilment of their own prediction, by convincing themselves and their neighbours that they are trustworthy soothsayers. But, so far as short-sighted mortals can scan the future, we venture to predict, in our turn, that the more hopeful view is also the more probable; and that the scheme, by God's blessing, will be carried to a successful issue. We venture to say so, because we have too much confidence in the general good sense of our members to believe that any considerable number of them will allow a sum of £500 to be lost to the body because they would have liked a larger sum to begin with. We would have liked to have heard of a larger sum too. It would have been very gratifying to have heard that the late Mr Ferguson had had so high an appreciation of the principles of the Original Seceders that he had left the bulk of his fortune to us; but it so happens that he has left us exactly £0, 0s. 0d., and it is only through the kind consideration of his trustees, and, we believe, the good offices of their secretary, that we have received an offer of any donation whatever. If from some other quarter we get an offer of £1000 to help us off with our debt, we shall heartily sympathise with those friends who would have us not to look at the £500; but there is a homely proverb, that half a loaf is better than no bread, and, cheap as money has become at the present time, we do not expect to hear of trustees or any others running about with sums of £500, entreating small religious denominations like ours to relieve them of their custody. Seriously, we think it not unlike despising the goodness of Divine Providence to speak of the grant offered to us as one which we should not put ourselves to any trouble to endeavour to secure.

Of the practicability and probability of our accomplishing all that

is required of us, within the specified period, we entertain not the shadow of a doubt, from what we know of the resources of our people, and of their general attachment to the important truths for which we are called upon to witness as a Church. It is only needful, therefore, that we should show why it is to be done, and how it is to be done. Though it is a layman that writes, it will be convenient to divide what we have to say into heads and particulars; the practical improvement we shall leave to our readers.

I. *Why it is to be done.* It is to be done because we are enjoined to "Owe no man anything, but to love one another." It is strange that argument should require to be employed to convince any one that debt is a burden to be got rid of as soon as possible. But many worthy people, who have a salutary horror of debt on their own personal estate, have imbibed the extraordinary delusion that "a good comfortable debt" upon church property is an excellent thing for keeping a congregation together. We have really no patience to set ourselves seriously to contend against such a preposterous and self-contradictory notion. If a few individuals are personally liable for church debt, they may be constrained, by a selfish motive, to stick by the stone and lime of the fabric; but certainly, other things being equal, no one will ever join or remain by a church because there is debt upon it, but will rather gladly escape to some other connection, where his contributions will be of avail for promoting some evangelical enterprise. Without farther argument on that point, we just refer to our text, "Owe no man anything." If any of our readers can get over that, no more need be said; for certainly a church, any more than an individual, cannot prosper while wilfully neglecting to fulfil a scripture injunction. But it is sometimes said that the generation to come ought to bear their share, and that we ought to leave something for them to do. That argument assumes that our posterity will be so backward and faithless, that unless we saddle them with debt which they *must* pay, they will not contribute what they ought to the support of the gospel. There is reason to fear, that when we take up this most uncharitable opinion, we are judging of our posterity by ourselves. Common sense, as well as scripture, teaches us that it is our duty to pay off our debt as soon as we are able; and if we do not remove it when we have £500 offered to help us, we had better make up our minds that the thing is not to be done at all, for we are at present certainly not increasing in numbers and resources. For our own sakes, as well as for the sake of those who are to follow, this debt should be got rid of now. We cannot afford to pay £150 of yearly interest for debt while our ministers are so inadequately supported, and students are deterred from coming forward to supply the places of those who are removed, except such as have so much of the martyr spirit as to face a life-long struggle with genteel pinching poverty. With thousands at home and abroad sunk in heathenism, we cannot afford to give away £150 a-year to our creditors, and have this argument of debt employed as an unanswerable reason for refusing to engage in any Christian enterprise which involves the expenditure of money. To all appearance, the generation to come will have, if possible, even

stronger claims on their Christian liberality than we have; and they will have good reason to complain of us, if we prevent them from doing their proper work by saddling them with debt which it is in our power to liquidate.

Then let it be remembered that many individuals and a number of congregations have already made a good beginning. That consideration should act as an inducement to others, not only by provoking their zeal, but by putting them in remembrance that much of what others have done will be lost to the Church if they do not their part. Congregations may say that they do no wrong, if, in declining to take a part in this movement, they express their intention not to take anything out of the central fund for their own debt. But it is one of the conditions of the grant, and the only one which appears to us to be perhaps rather stringent, that *all* the debt must be paid off. And as we suppose no congregation will refuse either to pay off their own debt or to allow any one else to do it for them, the self-denying ordinance of the congregations supposed just amounts to this—pay off our debt if you like, but we will not touch it with one of our fingers. We entreat all who are backward to reflect how disastrous may be the results of failure in a movement already hopefully begun. It would tend to destroy mutual confidence and brotherly regard, and to put an extinguisher on any future movement for the general good. But there is no reason to apprehend failure if we do our duty; and, therefore, we proceed to show,

II. *How it is to be done.* 1. In the first place, it is to be done by all giving as God has prospered them. Unhappily, the number of professing Christians who give upon this principle, or upon any *principle* at all, is very limited. We have among us, as all religious denominations have, some who think that when they have paid their seat rent, got decently past the plate on Sabbath, as they imagine, by putting in a copper, and thus doing something for the support of ordinances among themselves, they have discharged their whole duty in the way of contributing to Christ's cause. If we do not show a more adequate sense of our responsibility to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for the use we make of the means with which He has entrusted us, as His stewards, this scheme will not be successful; but if we give to the cause of the Lord a due proportion of what He has given to us, this scheme, and every seasonable scheme for the peace and prosperity of our Church, will, with His blessing, be crowned with success.

There are three classes to whom it may be proper to address a few words of brotherly exhortation in regard to this movement—wealthy individuals, wealthy congregations, and poor congregations.

Would it be too much to say that there are probably some twenty individual members of the Original Secession Church who could themselves clear away the whole of our debt, without putting themselves to serious inconvenience? We believe it would not. But do we propose that these wealthy friends should divide the debt into some twenty shares, assume it to themselves, and make an end of it? Certainly not. The duty and the privilege of giving to the cause of Christ is not confined to the wealthy. Many of our poorer members would thus

be deprived of an opportunity of contributing to an object which closely concerns the prosperity of a cause which they love; and the salutary effect which might be expected from a hearty combined effort by the brotherhood, rich and poor, would be lost. We would ask these friends to do no more than we ask all to do, *i. e.*, to give as God has prospered them. But then let it be remembered that a working man may be giving as God has prospered him when he gives 20s., or 10s., or 5s. a-year to the Debt-Liquidation Scheme, and an individual in better worldly circumstances may be doing no more when he gives his £10, £20, or £50 a-year. We believe it is often from want of consideration that our wealthy members do not give more in proportion to their means, and more in proportion to what is given by their poorer brethren. We know of a working man, who, with his two sons, apprentices, has subscribed altogether, for the three years, £7 to the Debt-Liquidation Scheme: we know also a congregation in which female servants have subscribed each £5 for this object; and we know farther, that these are by no means acts of unprecedented liberality on the part of our members of the working classes. If our more wealthy friends contributed in the proportion of these large-hearted persons, then the central fund, which must chiefly depend upon large contributions, would be raised forthwith. But there is a common delusion among many of the wealthier members of Christian churches, our own not excluded, that £1, 1s. is just about "the thing" for a subscription to any good object, and that £5 is a magnificent sum, only to be given once or twice in a lifetime. Yet we hear of single contributions, by members of other churches, amounting to £50, £100, £1000, and even £30,000. Now, notwithstanding our comparative poverty, would it be an extravagance to expect, that when large and wealthy denominations get their £1000, we may get our £10, and that when they get an occasional £5000, we may get an occasional £50? If a few donations of £50 were announced at the approaching meeting of Synod, it would so stimulate and hearten all of us, that the scheme would be entered into with confidence and cheerfulness, and, humanly speaking, have its success ensured. Let our wealthy friends think how much depends upon them at this juncture. We have lately seen that God has been opening the hearts of some of them to devise liberal things for the perpetuation of our principles, by assisting aspirants for the ministry; and surely we may hope that more will respond to the urgent call which, in God's providence, is now made upon them.

In speaking of wealthy congregations in the Original Secession Church, we need hardly say that we use the phrase simply as a relative term. We are quite aware that there are no congregations in our connection which would, in larger denominations, be called wealthy congregations; but we hope those whom we have in our eye will not, therefore, too hastily conclude that we are not referring to them. There are congregations in the body who, as compared with others, may be fairly said to be wealthy congregations—able not only to support ordinances among themselves, but to do something substantial for their poorer brethren. What is their duty? Clearly this—to look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the

things of others. Some of their poorer brethren are fairly crushed with debt; and if speedy relief do not come to them, another generation may witness the extinction of our Testimony in these places, as it has already been extinguished in other places, for want of brotherly aid. Instead of allowing the weak congregations which remain to die out for want of timely aid, let us rather strengthen them, and make each of them a *point d'appui* for carrying our principles far and wide, and enabling us to display the banner given us because of the truth in places where it has never before been unfurled, or where the remembrance of it has passed away. A church has no choice but to advance or recede. If we make up our mind to leave to the enemy any outpost which it is in our power to defend, our faith has failed, our decline has begun.

And now, a friendly word to the poorer congregations. It is the poorer congregations who will be the greatest gainers by the success of this movement, and it is of importance that they should not be backward. They may be tempted to imagine that the little they can do is not worth the doing. But that is a serious mistake. In the first place, they cannot expect that wealthier congregations will feel much induced to help them if they do not show *some* disposition to help themselves; and, on the other hand, if they put their own shoulder to the wheel, they need not fear that they will be reproached because they can do but little. In the next place, a large proportion of our congregations are poor, and if each do but a little, our funds will be sensibly augmented. Let such congregations remember the commendation bestowed by the Apostle upon the Christians of Macedonia, whose deep poverty abounded to the riches of their liberality. Let them remember the commendation bestowed by our Lord himself on the poor widow who cast her two mites into the treasury. And let them remember that if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

2. The next remark we make, in the way of showing how it is to be done, is, that it should be done *at once*. The chief obstacle to the general progress of the movement hitherto has been, that every one is waiting on another. Some say that they are disposed to enter into it; but they doubt whether the movement will be general, and so conclude that there is no use beginning till they see what the rest are doing. If this is true Scotch caution, the sooner we are de-nationalised in that respect the better. How can any *general* movement be successful if every one is to wait on another? What would be the result if the forces ordered to make a combined attack, from different points, on some stronghold, were all to wait in position after the signal had been given, till they should see whether their comrades in arms had entered on the fray? We never heard of an army so destitute of the *esprit de corps* as purposely to act so ignoble a part; and surely the soldiers of Jesus Christ should not have less confidence in their brethren. But even supposing that it should turn out that some do not bear their share in this enterprise, what then? Why, it never happens, in any such case, that all take their full proportion of the labour; when a strong pull is to be made to get a machine into motion,

the most of the labour always falls upon the willing horse. There are always those in a church who have no spiritual life, and who, therefore, not feeling the blessedness of the gospel themselves, have no concern for the extension and perpetuation of its blessings; and there are those, too, in our own Church as well as in others, of whose spiritual condition we have reason to be hopeful, in whom, nevertheless, the love of God has not wrought so powerfully as to expel the love of the world. The greater is the honour and the privilege, and the greater will be the reward of grace, in the case of those who strive to make up the shortcomings of half-hearted brethren. From the terms of the present offer, it is specially necessary that every one, according as he has purposed in his heart, should give at once without waiting on another. Only a limited time is allowed for the fulfilment of the conditions, and every day that is lost in making a beginning diminishes to that extent the prospect of success. He gives twice that gives early.

3. It is necessary that all should have an opportunity of contributing. We sometimes misjudge the ability and liberality of our brethren. When a congregation has been making an effort to raise money for some special object, we are too ready to conclude that they have exhausted their whole available means, and cannot be expected to take part in any further movement. Ministers and office-bearers, as well as others, sometimes fall into this mistake, and are specially likely to fall into it as regards their own congregations. It would appear, therefore, to be desirable that the Synod should enjoin that congregational meetings be held all over the Church to consider this subject, and resolve what they shall do. This would often be a welcome relief to those who are set over the congregations in the Lord, who might wish that their people should have the claims of this scheme brought before them, and yet might have delicacy in calling a meeting on their own responsibility; and it would be no unwarrantable stretch of the Synod's authority, nor a hardship to any congregation. The injunction, of course, cannot go the length of requiring any congregation to subscribe any particular sum, nor even to subscribe at all, if they should really find that they have not one pound to spare. The hardship would rather be, that some, who, in the forwardness of their mind, had made up their bounty beforehand, should be deprived of a coveted opportunity of giving to this fund through the medium of their own congregational organization. When the movement has been entered into by a congregation, the principle of giving an opportunity to all should also be kept in view by those taking charge of the subscriptions; they should not be too select in making up their list of expected subscribers. So far as our experience goes, it is the poor who are most liberal, and we know that they can be no losers by what they give in faith and love.

Another suggestion under this head may be worthy of consideration. If deputations were appointed to visit and address the different congregations on the claims of this important movement, it might be expected that there would be a better attendance at the congregational meetings, and a better prospect of their being stirred up to prove the sincerity of their attachment to their principles by giving

liberally for their support and transmission to posterity. This work would of course fall chiefly upon our ministers, who are heavily enough burdened already; but some of them would doubtless be willing to undertake this temporary duty, if put upon them by the Church; and possibly the co-operation of laymen might be obtained.

Most of our people could help forward this scheme, not only by subscribing themselves, but by obtaining subscriptions from their friends. There are some who have unhappily left us for other communions, who have not altogether cast off their first love, and who would be glad of an opportunity of testifying their respect for the Church of their fathers. Let those who know of such parties make application to them, and we believe our funds would be considerably benefitted thereby. Again, there are many families who have relations, either abroad or in parts of the country, where there are no Original Secession congregations. Let application be made to these friends also by individuals who know of such cases, and we believe there will generally be a hearty response. Even our juvenile members, especially the daughters of the Church, may do each a little—collectively, a great deal—to aid this movement, by procuring small subscriptions from friends in other denominations, by means of collecting-cards, which will be furnished to them on application to the Editor of the Magazine. If every one connected with us would work for this scheme as if its success depended upon his or her single exertions, there would be no fear of a happy result.

In conclusion, we would say to our brethren, that it appears to us as if the present juncture were something like a crisis in our history as a Church. We are broken and reduced, and, worst of all, we appear sometimes as if we were losing heart and losing faith in the cause for which we appear,—as if we were content to receive the dispensation of ordinances amongst ourselves without caring what becomes of the covenanted cause. We have now a favourable opportunity of freeing our feet from the fetters, and making a decided step in advance, if we do not slight the leadings of Providence. Not only have we the encouragement which is given in this offer of £500, but, simultaneously, we hear of vigorous efforts by some of the best men of the Free Church for the general diffusion of the principles of the Covenanted Church of Scotland. We hear of Reformation Societies, Anti-Popish Missions, Protestant Laymen's Associations, Evangelical Alliances, and other organizations, having for their object the promotion of evangelical Christianity and the arrest of Popery and infidelity. Yet the comparative impotence of all this machinery to accomplish the object in view is manifest; and, looking to the latent feeling of veneration which many members of Presbyterian churches other than our own still have for the memory of our covenanting ancestors, there is reason to hope that, were the principles for which our forefathers contended to the death resuscitated and fairly brought before the mind of the Christian community, it would be seen that what in former days checked the progress of Popery, infidelity, and immorality, is sufficient, by God's blessing, to do this again, when the nation shall acknowledge whence it has fallen, and repent, and do the first works. And

shall it be said of us that, with these encouragements, the cause for which our fathers shed their blood was allowed to go down in our hands, because we were not prepared to make even small pecuniary sacrifices? Our ears should tingle at the bare idea of such shameless faithlessness. But if, God helping us, and enlarging our hearts, we succeed in carrying this movement to a successful issue, the spirit of liberality and zeal thus evoked will certainly be of permanent benefit. We shall experience the truth of the words, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth:" we shall find that we are not so helpless as we imagined; but that, instead of standing always in the discouraging attitude of defence, we may, in faith, lengthen our cords and strengthen our stakes: we may hope that Christian liberality and vital godliness will be more and more increased; that young men will be found coming forward as standard-bearers of Reformation principles, and that we shall have a part in bringing about the fulfilment of the prediction of the dying martyr—"The Covenants, the Covenants shall yet be Scotland's reviving!"

Original Poetry.

LINES BY A MOTHER ON THE DEATH OF HER ONLY CHILD.

Death came and hurried thee away,
 God's jewel, lent to me—
 O let me not His will gainsay!
 Why should I mourn for thee?

Now landed on the heavenly shore—
 Escaped the raging sea,
 Where tempests howl and billows roar,—
 Why should I mourn for thee?

Above the reach of Satan's snares—
 From sin and sorrow free,—
 No death, no pain, no grief, no tears—
 Why should I mourn for thee?

Thou dwell'st among a noble race—
 In joyous harmony
 Hymning thy great Redeemer's praise,—
 Why should I mourn for thee?

Too young to worship God in time;
 Now perfect in degree:
 Thou sing'st that anthem most sublime!
 Why should I mourn for thee?

That costly crown upon thy head
 Can never tarnished be;
 'Twas purchased by thy Saviour's blood!
 Why should I mourn for thee?

Partaking of that love supreme,
That's matchless, full, and free—
Happy beyond what we can deem !
Why should I mourn for thee ?

Although thine absence oft depress ;
In joy, I hope to see
The time arrive when we'll embrace,—
Why should I mourn for thee ?

To God, most wise, be glory, praise !—
He gave—He took from me :
His purposes are fraught with grace,—
Why should I mourn for thee ?

D.

LITTLE CHILDREN.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God."—Mark, x. 14.

Behold these little ones—
Bright babes of Israel, to their Saviour brought !
Blest are they—Abram's sons,
Whose fathers for Messiah long have sought.
That Shepherd great now stands,
With love-outstretched hands ;
His bosom and His lips are fraught.

Disciples yet forbade
That interrupted thus their Lord should be.
Why were their hearts not glad
Thus mothers and their offspring dear to see ?—
The lambs Christ came to feed ;
His chosen Israel's seed ;—
He said " Forbid them not to come to me ! "

'Twas seldom that He frowned—
Not even when reviled by the foe,—
His voice now did resound,
With stern rebuke, to those who had said " No ! "
Displeased He sorely was
That, without leave or cause,
Approaching mothers should be treated so.

" Suffer the children dear
To be presented to their Saviour King !
Why should not those draw near,
Who shall at length with holy angels sing ?
I on my bosom bear
Their case, with tender care,
Till to my fold above I shall them bring.

Of such my kingdom is—
That purchased kingdom by a right divine ;—
These are the heirs of bliss,
Whose robes made white, shall like the angels' shine !
Twice-born, their souls shall live—
Their tongues sweet praises give ;—
In earth and heaven they shall be known as mine."

Emboldened by such grace,
 Their yearning mothers through the crowd now prest ;
 Illumined was each face,
 As each babe, laid upon His arms, was blest.
 Soothed by his looks of love,
 Like to a fondled dove,
 They, cowering, lay their heads upon His breast.

Thus bring thy babe to Him,
 Dear Christian mother, whom He still invites—
 Thy path is now less dim
 Than to the Hebrew mother were symbolic rites ;
 Come to His house of prayer—
 The sacred font is there ;—
 In faith's devotion Jesus still delights.

J. B.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa: being a Journal of an Expedition undertaken under the auspices of H. B. Majesty's Government in the Years 1849-1855. By Henry Barth, Ph.D., D.C.L., Fellow of the Royal Geographical and Asiatic Societies, &c. &c. 5 vols. Second Edition. London : Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, & Roberts. 1857.

THIS is a work of intense interest, and of the highest merit. It will form a monument of the varied qualifications of Dr Barth for the enterprise in which he embarked more durable than any that was ever reared of brass or marble. It is evident that Dr Barth's fitness, in respect of natural ability and acquirement, for the work in which he engaged, in its different departments, are of a very high order. Apart from the halo which his missionary character throws around Dr Livingstone's enterprise, and the fact that he embarked in his undertaking single-handed, we do not feel disposed to place Dr Barth a whit beneath the explorer of South Central Africa. If the one excels in one class of qualifications, the other excels not less in some other class.

The expedition, the results of which are recorded in the volumes of Dr Barth, was undertaken under the auspices of the British Government. Mr Richardson was sent out along with Dr Barth and Dr Overweg, both Germans, who, with the cordial concurrence of the Government, were associated with him in the enterprise, the principal object of which was fixed to be the exploration of Central Africa. Of the party sent on this mission it is melancholy to have to relate that Dr Barth is the only survivor ; but it is no small cause of thankfulness that he has been preserved amidst all the perils and hardships through which he passed, as well as amazing toils which he endured, to put present and future generations in possession of the varied fruits of the mission in which he acted so distinguished a part.

Dr Barth was in a remarkable degree prepared, in various ways, for the service to which Providence had destined him. He had been led

to make comparative geography and the colonial commerce of antiquity his special study, and had commenced a course of lectures on this subject in the University of Berlin. He had already become experimentally acquainted with Arab life and character, as well as with Mahometan customs, by a long journey along the northern regions of Africa. Of this part of his previous training, he says, in his preface, "Having undertaken this journey quite alone, I spent nearly my whole time with the Arabs, and familiarised myself with that state of human society where the camel is man's daily companion, and the culture of the date tree his chief occupation. I made long journeys through desert tracts. I travelled all round the great Syrtis, and, passing through the picturesque tract of Cyrenaica, traversed the whole towards Egypt. I wandered about for above a month in the desert valleys between Aswan and Kozér, and afterward pursued my journey by land all the way through Syria and Asia Minor to Constantinople." His reading had also been extensive in all that had been written regarding Africa, and especially as to those parts of it which he had now to traverse. He is also an antiquarian and a linguist of no mean order. His zeal, too, corresponded with his other qualifications. He was indefatigable, in every step of his progress, to be able to furnish others with as full and as minute an account as possible, not only of all that could be easily seen, but of all that it was possible to examine and record, now on the right hand and now on the left, of the route which the expedition pursued, and all around the spots in which they had their encampments for a longer or shorter period. To some the minuteness of the information given may seem a little tedious; but to the greater part of those who are likely to read these volumes, this will be one of the commendations. There can be no doubt that it is to the possession of these varied qualifications by Dr Barth, under God, that this expedition owes the remarkable success with which it has been crowned, so that Central Africa is no less clearly and satisfactorily disclosed to view on the north of the Equator than on the south by the great compeer of our author.

The first volume is occupied with a record of the preparations made for the enterprise before setting out from Tunis and Tripoli, and of the varied experience, pleasant and painful, of the travellers in their arduous and perilous journey from Tunis to the regions which it was the object of their ambition to reach and explore. This is interspersed and enlivened by a very distinct and interesting account of various objects which arrested the attention of Dr Barth in their progress, and a description of all that appeared to him most interesting, whether in respect of the light which it gave regarding the remote past or of the present condition of the inhabitants of the districts through which their route lay. In their progress they found numerous proofs of the extent to which the Roman Empire reached in the interior of the African continent, in the remains of various structures, and the inscriptions which are still to be deciphered. There are also monuments of ancient heathen idolatry, corresponding to those in Scythia and the Druidical relics in Britain. We may give Dr Barth's account

of one of these, as a specimen of the care with which he has examined every object of interest :—

"Here I had an opportunity of accurately investigating a very peculiar kind of ancient remains, giving a clue, I hope, to the character of the religion of the early inhabitants of these regions, though it seems impossible to give a satisfactory explanation respecting all the details of their structure.

"It consists in a pair of quadrangular pillars erected on a common basis, which is fixed into the ground, and measures 3 ft. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length, and 2 ft. 10 in. in width. The two pillars, which measure 2 ft. on each side, being 1 ft. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. asunder, are 10 ft. high. The western pillar has three quadrangular holes on the inside, while the corresponding holes in the eastern pillar go quite through; the lowest hole is 1 ft. 8 in. above the ground, and the second 1 ft. $\frac{1}{2}$ in. higher up, and so the third above the second. The holes are 6 in. square. Over the pillars, which at present lean to one side, is laid another enormous stone about 6 ft. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. long, and of the same width as the pillars, so that the whole structure bears a surprising resemblance to the most conspicuous part of the celebrated Celtic ruins at Stonehenge and other ruins in Malabar, about the religious purpose of which not the least doubt remains at present. But besides these, there are other very curious stones of different workmanship, and destined, evidently, for different purposes; some of them are large, flat, and quadrangular, very peculiarly worked, and adapted, probably, to sacrifices. One of them is 3 ft. in length and breadth, but with a projection on one side, and is 1 ft. 2 in. high. On the surface of this stone, and parallel to its sides, is carved a channel 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. broad, forming a quadrangle; and from this a small channel branches along the projecting part. Several stones of similar workmanship lie about. There is also the remnant of an enormous stone, 3 ft. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. at the back and across, but rounded off at the corners, looking like a solid throne, excepting that on the upper side there is an excavation measuring 1 ft. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. at the back, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. on the front, and 1 ft. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. across, and about 10 in. deep, with a small opening. This stone looks very peculiar, and probably formed an altar.

"These ruins are certainly very remarkable. Any one who looks at them, without prejudice or preconceived opinion, will be impressed with the belief that they belonged to a place of worship; though how this peculiar structure could be adapted to religious purposes, I will not undertake to decide."

We add the description given of another remarkable relic, which clearly shows that the same deities were worshipped in the interior of Africa as in Nineveh and Babylon :—

"The spot where we had pitched our tents afforded a very favourable locality for commemorating any interesting events, and the sandstone blocks which studded it were covered with drawings, representing various subjects, more or less in a state of preservation. With no pretensions to be regarded as finished sculptures, they are made with a firm and steady hand, well accustomed to such work, and, being cut to a great depth, bear a totally different character from what is generally met with in these tracts.

"The most interesting sculpture represented the following subject, the description of which I am unfortunately able at present to accompany with only an imperfect woodcut, as the drawing which I made of it on the spot was forwarded by me to England to Mr Birch, the celebrated Egyptian archaeologist, and seems to have been mislaid. The sculpture represents a group of three individuals of the following character and arrangement :—To the left is seen a tall human figure, with the head of a peculiar kind of bull, with long horns turned forward, and broken at the point; instead of the right arm, he has a peculiar organ terminating like an oar, while in his left hand he carries an arrow and a bow—at least such is the appearance, though it might be mistaken for a shield; between his legs a long tail is seen hanging down from his slender body. The posture of this figure is bent forward, and all its movements are well represented. Opposite to this curious individual is another one of not less remarkable character, but of smaller proportions, entirely human as far up as the shoulders, while the head is that of an animal which reminds us of the Egyptian ibis, without being identical with it. The small pointed head is furnished with three ears, or with a pair of ears and some other excrescence and beyond with a sort of hood (which, more than any other particular, recalls the

idea of Egyptian art), but it is not furrowed: over the fore part of the head is a round line representing some ornament, or perhaps the *basiliak*. This figure likewise has a bow in its right hand, but, as it would seem, no arrow, while the left hand is turned away from the body. Between these two half-human figures, which are in a hostile attitude, is a bullock, small in proportion to the adjacent lineaments of the human figure, but chiselled with the same care and the same skilful hand, with the only exception that the feet are omitted, the legs terminating in points—a defect which I shall have occasion to notice also in another sculpture. There is another peculiarity about this figure, the upper part of the bull, by some accident, having been hollowed out, while in general all the inner part between the deeply chiselled outlines of the sculptures is left in high relief. The animal is turned with its back towards the figure on the right, whose bow it seems about to break. The block on which it was sculptured was about four feet in breadth and three in height. It was lying loose on the top of the cliff."

On one occasion Dr Barth very nearly lost his life by leaving the caravan to examine a mountain at what appeared a little distance from their path, when the distance proved greater than he expected; and, having proceeded too far under the scorching rays of the burning sun, his strength and provisions failed, and, without being able to find his way to his fellow-travellers, he was at last compelled to lie down at the foot of a tree in a state of great exhaustion. The concluding part of his experience at this time, combined with that of his merciful deliverance, we give in his own words:—

"At length the long night wore away, and dawn was drawing nigh. All was repose and silence; and I was sure I could not choose a better time for trying to inform my friends, by signal, of my whereabouts. I therefore collected all my strength, loaded my pistol with a heavy charge, and fired—once—twice. I thought the sound ought to awaken the dead from their tombs, so powerfully did it reverberate from the opposite range, and roll along the wadi; yet no answer. I was at a loss to account for the great distance apparently separating me from my companions, who seemed not to have heard my firing.

"The sun that I had half longed for, half looked forward to with terror, at last rose. My condition, as the heat went on increasing, became more dreadful; and I crawled around, changing every moment my position, in order to enjoy the little shade afforded by the leafless branches of the tree. About noon there was of course scarcely a spot of shade left—only enough for my head,—and I suffered greatly from the pangs of thirst, although I sucked a little of my blood, till I became senseless, and fell into a sort of delirium, from which I only recovered when the sun went down behind the mountains. I then regained some consciousness, and crawled out of the shade of the tree, throwing a melancholy glance over the plain, when suddenly I heard the cry of a camel. It was the most delightful music I ever heard in my life; and, raising myself a little from the ground, I saw a mounted Tarki passing at some distance from me, and looking eagerly round. He had found my footstaps in the sandy ground, and losing them again on the pebbles, was anxiously seeking traces of the direction I had taken. I opened my parched mouth, and crying, as loud as my faint strength allowed, '*áman, áman*' (water, water), I was rejoiced to get for answer, '*iwah, iwah!*' and in a few moments he sat at my side, washing and sprinkling my head, while I broke out involuntarily into an uninterrupted strain of '*el hamdu lillahi, el hamdu lillahi!*'

"Having thus first refreshed me, and then allowed me a draught, which, however, I was not able to enjoy, my throat being so dry, and my fever still continuing, my deliverer, whose name was Musa, placed me upon his camel, mounted himself in front of me, and brought me to the tents. They were a good way off. The joy of meeting again, after I had been already despaired of, was great; and I had to express my sincere thanks to my companions, who had given themselves so much trouble to find me. But I could speak but little at first, and could scarcely eat anything for the next three days, after which I gradually recovered my strength."

For a considerable distance up into the interior regions of Africa,

the expedition had only to contend with the difficulties of prosecuting their journey under a burning sun, amidst barren wastes, in which it was difficult to obtain subsistence for man or beast; and, whilst this was all that they had to grapple with, our traveller gave full scope to his enthusiasm in examining all objects on the right and left, and in taking notes of their character, or in making sketches of them with his pencil, from which the numerous woodcuts with which this work is illustrated have been taken. But as they approached the more fertile and inviting regions of Central Africa, they were exposed to perils of a different kind. In these regions tribes of freebooters, who lived more or less by robbery—the Rob Roys of this part of Africa,—not only levied black-mail of the caravans that passed through the territories in which they roamed, but sometimes slew the travellers, and took all their property as their spoil. These desert banditti send their spies, in small armed parties, to inspect the strength of the respective caravans, and their powers of defence. These scouts are sometimes so bold as to encamp during the night in the immediate neighbourhood of the travellers, and enter into conversation with some of the parties, and sometimes succeed in producing a division among them, in order to make one party more easily their prey. After harassing the caravan to which the expedition had joined themselves for a considerable part of their way, so that they had to be armed and on their watch night and day, they at length came up in great strength, and, having succeeded in obtaining the consent of the great majority of the parties forming the caravan to deliver up the Christians, as the members of the expedition were known to be, instant death seemed now to await our author and his companions. Even at this crisis some stood by them, and did what they could in their behalf, and others urged them to change their religion, in the hope that this would save them, which is very doubtful, though the assailants made this one of their pretences for opposing their progress, and an argument which had its influence in preventing the rest of the caravan from combining in their defence, who were nearly all Mahometans. Of this part of their experience Dr Barth gives the following account :—

“Our own people were so firmly convinced that, as we stoutly refused to change our religion, though only for a day or two, we should immediately suffer death, that our servants, Mahommed, as well as Mukni, requested us most urgently to testify, in writing, that they were innocent of our blood. Mr Richardson himself was far from being sure that the sheikhs did not mean exactly what they said. Our servants and the chiefs of the caravan had left us with the plain declaration that nothing less than certain death awaited us; and we were sitting silently in the tent, with the inspiring consciousness of going to our fate in a manner worthy alike of our religion and of the nation in whose name we were travelling among these barbarous tribes, when Mr Richardson interrupted the silence which prevailed with these words—‘Let us talk a little. We must die; what is the use of sitting so mute?’ For some minutes death seemed really to hover over our heads, but the awful moment passed by. We had been discussing Mr Richardson’s last proposition for an attempt to escape with our lives, when, as a forerunner of the official messenger, the benevolent and kind-hearted Sliman rushed into our tent, and, with the most sincere sympathy, stammered out the few words, ‘You are not to die.’”

Dr Barth’s knowledge of the various histories which had been writ-

ten at earlier and later dates of these regions of Africa, enabled him to mark with interest and compare the condition of the more remarkable towns (African cities), as represented in the writings of ancient historians, with that in which he found them, and also perceive the changes which had taken place in the commerce of this part of the world. He visited alone some of those towns which have been what we may denominate the marts of African trade from time immemorial, and has given distinct details of all that is most interesting regarding them. His knowledge of the languages spoken enabled him also to obtain extensive information from some of the most intelligent natives; and all this, so far as he thought it would be acceptable, he places before his readers.

One of the remarkable characteristics of the inhabitants of this part of Africa is the intermixture of Mahometanism and Paganism, and the struggle which has been going on for ages between the two systems. This cannot be better stated than in the author's own words.

"The great and momentous struggle between Islamism and Paganism is here continually going on, causing every day the most painful and affecting results, while the miseries arising from slavery and the slave trade are here revealed in their most repulsive features. We find Mahometan learning engrafted on the ignorance and simplicity of the black races, and the gaudy magnificence and strict ceremonial of large empires side by side with the barbarous simplicity of naked and half-naked tribes. We here trace a historical thread, which guides us through this labyrinth of tribes, and overthrows kingdoms; and a lively interest is awakened by reflecting on their possible progress and restoration through intercourse with the more civilized parts of the world. Finally, we find here commerce in every direction, radiating from Kano, the great emporium of Central Africa, and spreading the manufactures of that industrious region over the whole of Western Africa."

For illustrations of the last statement, our readers must wait till our next number, when we expect to give a deeply interesting outline of what Dr Barth saw and records of the hitherto unexplored or very partially explored regions, to the borders of which he brings us in his first volume. His second and third volumes are occupied with a detailed account of the varied characteristics of these regions. He has to tell us of the remarkable fertility of this part of our globe, that had so long been reckoned almost uninhabitable—of the attainments of the tribes in agriculture, and even in manufacture—of heathen nations living in a degree of comfort, in which they vie with those who boast of civilization. He bears witness, also, to the comparatively happy condition of those central tribes, to which the curse of the slave trade has not reached, and to the baneful influence of this on all the communities which it touches. The seeds of this deadly upas tree have been diffused far and wide over Central Africa by the hands of those who bear the Christian name, and by their instrumentality this honoured name has long been covered with infamy. How long shall any nation, called Christian, continue to contract the guilt, and expose itself to the wrath of a sin-avenging God, by giving direct, or even indirect countenance to this horrible traffic!

In these volumes our author tells us, further, of the mighty navigable rivers with which this part of the African continent is traversed, for even thousands of miles—of extended and abundantly watered plains,

capable of yielding a vast and varied produce of different kinds, and of the fields which are ripe for the harvest of missionary enterprise, as well as for extended commercial pursuits, which it was the chief object of his mission to investigate.

It is made clearly manifest that there are ample sources in Central Africa whence, by an easy process of cultivation, the whole demands of our cotton markets could be met, so that we should no longer have any excuse for giving an indirect support to the atrocious system of American slavery. At present we are the chief purchasers of the produce of the fields of these American States, in the cultivation of which our fellow-men are doomed to labour, as if they were so many beasts of burden, and whose oppressors wreath the most galling chains ever worn by human beings around the necks of their victims, and this with the sanction of the laws of one of the greatest and most enlightened nations of modern times. The greatness of the guilt thus contracted is unspeakably heightened by the degree of light in the midst of which, under this system, the most horrid crimes are every day so extensively perpetrated.

Surely the twofold successful researches in Central Africa, by Dr Barth and Dr Livingstone, indicate that the great Disposer is about to make a bright day, both in a commercial and spiritual respect, dawn on this part of the world, which had been so long shrouded in darkness. Is there not cause to hope that the set time has come when the ancient promise, that Ethiopia shall stretch out her hand to God, shall have a blissful accomplishment?

If Dr Barth has displayed great prudence, courage, and zeal, in the prosecution of his arduous mission, and been indefatigable in laying up immense stores of varied information at the various stages of his journey, he has been no less successful in placing these before the public in a clear and forcible style, which is the more remarkable when it is known that the English language is not his native tongue. The merit of this work is in all respects such that it is plain no library will henceforth be complete in which these volumes have not a place.

It may be added that the publishers, in their department, are doing full justice to this work, in the abundance and beauty of the plates and woodcuts by which each volume is embellished and illustrated, as well as by the number of maps furnished of the different stages of Dr Barth's journey.

The Tombstones of the Scottish Martyrs. By the Rev. Robert M'Corkle, A.M. W. R. M'Phun, Glasgow and London.

At page 58, vol. ii., of this Magazine, we called attention to the organization of an Association within the Free Church for the revival of the Covenanted Reformation. We had then occasion to notice its first publication, entitled "Statement of Principles and Objects of a proposed Association, in connection with the Free Church, for promoting the Principles of the Covenanted Reformation." We have marked with unabating interest the course adopted by that Association, and more especially the service rendered to the cause of God by two of its leading

members. To the one—the Rev. Alexander Hislop of Arbroath—we are indebted for several masterly productions in the controversy with Antichrist; to the other—the Rev. Robert M'Corkle—we are indebted for the vindication of the principles of the Covenanted Reformation in a series of tracts, of which the "Tombstones of the Martyrs" is one just issued. We are not aware to what extent the Association has received the countenance and support of ministers and office-bearers in the Free Church; but we have ground to believe that the voice of even "two witnesses" within her pale has been already heard by many throughout her borders, and that, as the storm rises, there will be not a few ready to grasp the banner thus unfurled "for Christ's Crown and Covenant."

"The following are the objects and Rules of the Association, in connection with the Free Church, for promoting the principles of the Covenanted Reformation:—

"I. The main objects of the Association shall be to exhibit the sins of the Church and of the Nation, with respect to the breach of the National Covenants—to press upon the attention of both the duty of repentance, because of the violation of them—and to seek for, on the part of both, the recognition of the continued obligation and the renewal of these covenant engagements.

"II. It shall endeavour to promote these ends throughout the Church and the Nation by the instrumentality of the press and other agencies.

"III. It shall hold periodical meetings of the office-bearers and members for conference, for humiliation, and for united prayer, on behalf of the revival of religion in the Church and the land, in the Churches of the Reformation, and throughout the world.

"IV. It shall encourage and endeavour to promote union and co-operation among the friends of the covenanted cause, not only in Scotland, but in England and Ireland.

"V. All office-bearers and members in communion with the Free Church shall be eligible as office-bearers and members of the Society.

"VI. All meetings of the Committee and of the Association shall be opened and closed with prayer."

We have thought it proper thus to embody the constitutional principles of this Association in connection with our notice of the second publication to which it has given rise. Space forbids a review of these principles, however important in themselves and however important to the Free Church and the covenanted cause of God in the land; but we hail their announcement as the "little cloud like a man's hand," which may, under the blessing of God, ere long overspread the sky of the Free Church, and gladden the hearts of those who are pleading and waiting for the general revival of the Covenanted Reformation.

We have been the more particular in calling attention to this Association in its rise and progress, because we are not unfrequently represented as though we were hostile to the Free Church. This has arisen, we are aware, from the fact that we were constrained to speak out freely of what we deemed her defects in this very matter, when forced into controversial conflict with our late brethren who have entered her communion. This feeling has also been aggravated by the local efforts of congregations, or parts of congregations, to preserve their property in connection with the Original Secession Church. But these are mere incidents necessarily arising out of the disruption of the Original Secession Synod, having reference chiefly to those who

left us, and the assertions made by them regarding the position and principles of the Free Church, in their attempts to vindicate the course which they took in laying down the Judicial Testimony for the Covenanted Reformation which they had sworn to maintain. In this sense, we believe there are many in the Free Church who approved the course we have been constrained to pursue, and none more so than those who have formed the Free Church Association for the revival of those very principles for which the Original Secession Church has been honoured to contend. We positively disclaim all hostility to the Free Church as such. We met her with a deputation, and gave her a heartfelt welcome when she burst her chains and stood forth as the bold assertor of spiritual freedom. We have marked her progress, and rejoiced in the good that she has been able to accomplish at home and abroad. We have sympathized with her trials; and few things would gladden our hearts more than to see her take up the position to which these faithful ministers within her own pale are now urging her to ascend.

All honour to those friends of the covenanted cause who are thus combining for the revival of those Bible principles which characterized the First and Second Reformations. We wish them success in their persevering efforts, feeling assured that nothing more is requisite than full information regarding the principles of the Covenanted Reformation, and the influences of the Spirit, to lead to their adoption.

These observations have been elicited by the manner in which our author treats of the Tombs of the Martyrs. He gazes on the memorials of those mighty dead not as a "hero-worshipper." He can justly estimate the character of the martyrs—he can admire their moral courage, and appreciate their ardent piety—he can weep for their sorrows, and sympathize with all their sufferings—he can scan with the historic eye their gloomy dungeons, and burn with the ardour of the patriot while treading on their graves. But he can do more than this. He can read the inscription on their tombs as God's record of a nation's guilt—as the martyrs' record against Antichrist, whether in Popish or Prelatic form—and as the testimony of a great cloud of witnesses "for Christ's Crown and Covenant." The author well observes, that on these memorial-stones there is a double record, handing down the names of two distinct classes—the Martyrs of Jesus, and the Minions of Antichrist. Thus he remarks in chapter I.—

The inscription we have just alluded to reveals a new feature in connection with the grave-stones of the martyrs, which is worthy of our special attention. In several instances they contain a record at once of glory and of infamy. The memory of the martyr is handed down, together with that of the persecutor, to all generations. The tombstone is a monument both of honour and of shame—both of admiration and of execration. It is like the anticipation of the judgment day. It is the acquittal of the oppressed and the condemnation of the oppressor. Thus the cold-blooded murder of John Brown, of Priesthill—a tragedy, the horrors of which ring in the ears of Scotland till this hour—is recorded on the same broad stone that declares the high character of the martyr—

"Butchered by Clavers and his bloody band,
Raging most ravenously o'er all the land."

In chapter II. the author treats of "*The Testimony which the Inscriptions record, and its agreement with the living and dying Testimonies of the Martyrs.*"

His selections are chiefly from the martyrs of the Second Reformation; and he brings out most distinctly the twofold aspect of their testimony, clearly proving that which many forget or deny—that they suffered for the continued obligations of the Covenants, as well as for the owing the headship of Christ as King.

"The martyrs gladly seized and sternly upheld the time-honoured banner—'*for the Crown of Christ.*' It was that which their great Head, at this period, had put into their keeping; but, at the same time, they indicated the main ground which their contending for this principle was designed to secure, when they inscribed also on their banner—'*for the Covenant.*' The contest did not terminate in the assertion of Christ's supremacy as sole King of His Church, but looked beyond this to those paramount interests of the covenanted cause which had all been basely surrendered at the time when the Crown of Christ was laid in the dust."

This is the light in which our author views the record of that testimony which the martyrs sealed with their blood; and we think it is the very aspect of that testimony which the witnesses for Christ ought to lift up in our own day. In the conflict with Popery and Prelacy both aspects are requisite to complete the Church's testimony, and both our author presses upon the attention of his readers.

After giving striking specimens of the records of the Tombstones of the Martyrs in different parts of Scotland, and also extracts of their dying testimonies, our author rehearses the sum of the whole in the following striking sentences:—

"Thus the voice of the Scottish martyrs, like the voice of the true church, is one and the same during all the period from the Restoration to the Revolution. There might be 'present truths' to be contended for, or there might be existing defections to be protested against, such as the acceptance of the sinful Indulgence at one time, the yielding to the exaction of the cess for the special suppression of the faithful and free preaching of the gospel at another, or to the insidious toleration offered by James the Seventh with the view of advancing the interests of Popery at another; but the one feature that marks and harmonises the whole period, is the testimony for the work of the Covenanted Reformation. For the covenanted cause the martyrs uniformly testified—for the covenanted cause they repeatedly declared, in their last moments, that they died—against the sin of the rulers, and of all classes in the nation, in the breach of the Covenants, they protested often with their expiring breath—and these violated deeds they again and again affirmed on the scaffold were continually binding on the nation, and could be annulled by no party nor power upon earth. The inscriptions on the tombstones form, therefore, an exact counterpart of the contentings of the martyrs, both in their lives and in their deaths."

In chapter III.—"*The call to revive the Testimony*" of the martyrs—our author makes a pathetic and masterly application of the data adduced in the preceding chapter as a powerful motive to present duty, civil as well as ecclesiastical, from which we give the following specimens:—

"The meaning of the call" (the call to repentance, which he is urging) "is not yet exhausted. The permanent obligation of the work for which the martyrs contended must be formally declared anew by the British nation, and their complete testimony, both in its ecclesiastical and its civil aspects, revived. We do not intend here to take up the argument for the scriptural obligation of our National Covenants, but

* See the "Cloud of Witnesses," and "Naphtali."

we present such considerations as are suggested by the subject before us. The fact that the reformers and martyrs have left this testimony behind them, that these Covenants are binding on posterity, is fitted, we think, very much to affect the conscience of the nation with regard to the violation and neglect of them. The dying testimony bequeathed by a Christian man of distinguished piety and excellence of character, for the behoof of his surviving family or his kindred, is generally considered as possessing a peculiar sacredness. Esteem, and affection, and veneration for the memory of the departed have received and cherished such counsels as worthy of all reverence, because of the quarter from which they came. Independently of the value of the testimony, considered in itself, this has often been the homage paid to it. Now, the fact that there has been a succession of such testimony as we have shown on the part of the martyrs—that with one voice they have declared the same thing—that they have not merely transmitted their principles and their example to posterity, but have affirmed with their dying breath that their descendants are included with themselves in the obligation of the same bonds, and that by no power on earth can these bonds be dissolved—is surely deserving of supreme regard and earnest attention and inquiry on the part of all those who profess to reverence the characters and the deeds of the martyrs. Is not such an unbroken succession of testimony a most impressive fact, which should be deeply pondered both by the churches and by the nation? And does not the appeal to both become a still more solemn one when it is remembered that they struggled and died for the work of the Covenanted Reformation as permanently binding on these kingdoms?"

Of the frequent use made of the term *perjury*, as the heinous sin of which the witnesses and martyrs felt that these nations were guilty, Mr M'Corkle makes effective use under this head, an extract from which will be refreshing to our readers—

"There is one word ever recurring in the inscriptions on the monuments in memory of the martyrs, which should sound a note of loud awakening in the ears of the nation. That word is 'Perjury.' It stands out as if 'graven with an iron pen in the rock,' that posterity may not fail to mark and to ponder it. It appears again and again as a testimony to the fact that Britain lies under a weight of guilt which should convert her joy into trembling. At the very time when the witnesses of Christ were accused of high treason, and condemned at a human tribunal, this was the charge which they laid at the door of the rulers and the nation. We believe that it was ratified in heaven. 'Perjury'—it is the crime that, while Britain wears at this moment the most glorious crown on the earth, is most deeply branded on her brow. 'Perjury'—it is the crime which she has wilfully repeated, with fearful despite and ingratitude, and continuous declension and rebellion following in its train. She stands arraigned at the bar of heaven, the same nation now as of old—one and the same social body through all the successive stages of her history, and under the same moral government of that God, who in this world pours out His sure judgments on kingdoms for the sins both of the present and of the past. She is arraigned with many a charge in the indictment; but this is the head of her offending, that she has broken and trodden in the dust the oath of God. It is the oath in regard to which God is not only 'judge and witness, but the party with whom the covenant is made.* Let her pause even now, and weigh well her solemn position. If the case so stands, it is a terrible reality. Shall she contend, at the expense of much blood and treasure, for the observance of treaties between nation and nation with respect to the things of this earth, and not fear lest God should be a swift witness and judge against her for the breach of the covenant with Himself in matters of heavenly concern and of unchangeable moral obligation."

The distinguishing characteristic of the Association, under the superintendence of which this tract is issued, and which especially enlists our sympathies, is the breadth and thoroughness of the reformation which it has for its object. This is the glory of the movement; and we trust the noble spirits who, in the face of much discouragement,

* See Rev. J. Brown's (of Wamphray) "Apologetical Relation."

have persevered in this work, will not be left to yield to any temptations to swerve from making their aim the revival of *all* the scriptural attainments which our reforming ancestors embodied in the Covenanted Reformation. It is in the way of thus endeavouring to follow the Lord fully that they have the best reason to expect that they shall enjoy Divine countenance and support. Our readers will hail the sentiments expressed in the following paragraph :—

"The whole testimony delivered to us by the martyrs is a heritage which we are called to preserve inviolable, and to transmit pure and entire to our children's children. Were it only a heritage of liberty, men, in whom every spark of patriotism has not been wholly quenched, would seek to revere and to cherish it. But here is liberty, in union with all that is hallowed in religion, bequeathed to posterity with the solemnity and the permanent obligation of a nation's oath. It is a heritage that bears in it all that is reckoned sacred in heaven, and all that should be valued as precious on earth. For ever will it stand connected with the most marvellous doings of God in these realms, and with the 'remembrance of the years of the right hand of the Most High.' Even the civil and religious privileges that yet remain to us may be traced back to their source in the contendings to which it gave rise; for the liberties that were secured to the British empire at the Revolution of 1688 were won upon the mountains and the moors of Scotland. Shall we still continue to slight and to disown it?"

It is not easy to pause in quoting from this tract, so replete with what is animating to all the friends of the cause of the Covenants, in defence of which so many of the best sons and daughters of Scotland loved not their lives unto the death, but we shall only add a few sentences from the concluding paragraph :—

"A great war of principles awaits us, similar to that waged by our forefathers. The battles of the First and the Second Reformations must be fought over again. 'Who will bring us into the strong city? Who will lead us into Edom? Wilt not thou, O God, who hadst cast us off? and thou, O God, who didst not go out with our armies? Through God we shall do valiantly, for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.' In this name we exalt our banner; and we trust that, by the power of his Spirit, a host of living witnesses, the true successors of the martyrs, will rally around it. While Rome aims at a national resuscitation of her church, as it existed centuries ago in these realms, and while a corrupt Prelacy seeks for a restoration of the times of the Stuarts and of Laud, we shall answer them by a call for a national resurrection of the Christian principles and Christian heroism of our ancient reformers and martyrs. While they vaunt of their destructive conspiracies against the truth, we shall tell them of our resistless National League and Covenants for the defence and preservation of it."

Our principles, as Original Seceders, are identical with those which the members of this Association are so zealous in seeking to revive in a Church which has hitherto refused to give them a hearing in the discussion of this great subject in her supreme judicatory, and in which they have had much opposition to encounter in her subordinate judicatories. There is an elastic power possessed by God's witnesses, arising from the consciousness that it is the truth of God for which they contend and suffer, and the assurance that this shall yet triumph. This imparts to their spirit a buoyancy which nothing can depress. This enabled the confessors and martyrs of the past to brave the greatest perils, and display heroic courage amidst the greatest sufferings. And it is only by the possession of a portion of this spirit that the indomitable perseverance of this small band in the Free Church can be accounted for, in the face of frowns from those in high

place within her pale. There are two effects, among others, which the testimony and efforts of the leaders of this Association ought to have on Original Seceders. They ought to reprove us for our backwardness in the cause, in support of which it is our honour and privilege to be associated under the long displayed banner of a Judicial Testimony, and also for any decay of esteem for these principles, and of zeal for their maintenance and propagation, which may have taken place among us. And they ought to animate us, under all discouragements, to manifest a noble heroism in meeting the difficulties with which our position calls us at present to grapple, and to arouse to every effort faithfully to discharge the great trust so solemnly committed and approved of by us, in which the glory of God and the welfare of society, both civil and ecclesiastical, are so deeply concerned.

Some will no doubt say—these Covenanters should at once come and join us and strengthen our hands, who are, as a Church, associated for the support of the principles which they have so much at heart. It is natural to us, in our position, to think thus, and they would, indeed, be a most valuable accession. But they do not yet see this to be their duty. They feel that they have yet to do a duty to the Free Church with which they have been associated. It is to be marked, also, that they are in a very different position from that of the Original Seceders who have joined the Free Church. They have not, like them, drawn back—they have not laid down a Judicial Testimony for the Covenanted Reformation which they had once grasped, and by which they had sworn to stand—their movement is upward, and therefore hopeful.

It is to be remembered, also, that the first Seceders contended for the principles which they afterwards embodied in their Judicial Testimony for a considerable time in the Church of Scotland, and that their light, in regard to principle and practice, was gradual. And surely if the late Dr M'Crie hailed and encouraged a partial movement for reformation in the Church of Scotland, extending only to the abolition of patronage, still more ought we to rejoice in, and encourage a movement which has for its object a thorough revival of the Covenanted Reformation, both civil and religious—both as to doctrine and practice, government and discipline.

MEETING OF SYNOD.—The Synod of United Original Seceders meets in Main Street Church, Glasgow, on Monday, the 17th May, at half-past Six o'clock evening.

THE FERGUSON BEQUEST DEBT-LIQUIDATION SCHEME.—The Glasgow congregation, we understand, has already raised between £190 and £200; and as their own debt only amounts to £136, there will be from this source a clear gain of about £60 to the Central Fund. Of course, if the Glasgow congregation receives an allowance to clear off their own debt, their contribution to the Central Fund will be proportionably increased.

PRESENTATION.—On the 18th ultimo, the Rev. John M'Kay, minister of the congregation of Original Seceders, Aberdeen, was waited on, and presented with a handsome Pulpit Bible and Psalm Book, copy of Bagster's *Hexapla*, and Kitto's *Biblical Cyclopedia*, 2 vols.,—all from the ladies of his congregation.

THE
ORIGINAL SECESSION MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1858.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. JOHN AITKEN,

LATE OF ABERDEEN.

PART III.

THE words of the Spirit, by Solomon—"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Prov. iii. 6)—seem to have been, in a remarkable degree, the motto of the honoured subject of this memoir. We have already seen that Mr Aitken had endeavoured to act in the spirit of this Divine counsel in regard to a very important step in his earthly pilgrimage, and we have now to mark the experience which he had of the faithfulness of God in the fulfilment of the promise, in his obtaining a partner, in the bestowment of whom he had eminently to acknowledge the Lord's goodness to him.

On the 29th of September, 1816, Mr Aitken married Miss Somerville, only daughter of Mr J. Somerville, tanner, Leith. Mrs Aitken's father, Mr Somerville, and his ancestors, belonged to the Secession, and were connected with it from the commencement; but her mother, and her progenitors, were Reformed Presbyterians. Mrs Aitken remembers having often heard that her great-grandmother, by the mother's side, was taken many miles, at the dead of night, to be baptized by Mr Renwick; and she has had in her possession part of a personal covenant written by her grandmother, in which she had devoted to God her children and her children's children to the latest generation.

As to this event in his life, which contributed so much to his happiness, and, no doubt, also to his usefulness, we find Mr Aitken saying in his diary—

"Having a few minutes to spare, I embrace the opportunity of taking notice of the late important change which has taken place in my circumstances in the world. It hath pleased Him who 'setteth the solitary in families' to grant me an agreeable partner. . . . I was aiming to set the Lord before me in this, and I have reason to think that He hath directed my path. 'A prudent wife is from the

Lord,' and I think I have obtained this blessing from Him. . . . O that my heart were filled with gratitude to my Father and God, who has dealt so kindly with me! We were married by Dr M'Crie of Edinburgh, and everything was managed most agreeably; but I am afraid that my heart has been too much set upon the creature, and my mind withdrawn from Him who is the fountain of all good. I have chosen God as the portion of my soul, and I would sincerely desire to claim Him as such. . . . Another very important step of my life has been taken. I was licenced, ordained, and settled in a house of my own, and now I have entered into the marriage state. There may be other important steps before me; but of one I am certain, and I desire to be frequently looking at it and keeping it much in my view—my departure from this world. Soon I must quit this clay tabernacle, and enter upon the eternal state. O that my dear partner and I may be found in Christ at that day! that when He who is our life may appear, we also may appear with Him in glory. One thing which I have much need of is, wisdom to conduct myself in a prudent manner, if the Lord is pleased to spare me any time in the world. I am weak and foolish, and know not the way in which I should go, in my family, my congregation, and in the world. I need the guidance of Him whose name is 'Wonderful Counsellor,' and I desire to take encouragement from His promise, 'I will guide thee with mine eye,' and especially from that which has often been sweet to me, 'In all thy ways acknowledge,' &c. That word struck me somewhat, lately occurring in my ordinary reading 'Beloved, think it not strange,' &c. J. and I were reading it together, and I could not help expressing my thoughts to her. Whether it be sooner or later, I expect some fiery trials. May the Lord give me strength to bear them, and every day give grace according to my need!"

Mr Aitken's expectations regarding his partner were fully realized. Mrs Aitken proved indeed a "help meet." Of her he had good cause to speak as one of the best of wives, and the sweet companion of his life. By her he was effectually freed from many cares; and, under Mrs Aitken's management, he saw every thing in the household noiselessly ordered in the best manner, and turned to the best account. She so shared with him in all his joys, that they were enhanced, and in all his sorrows, that they were lightened.

Mr Aitken continued to cherish the same devotional spirit and holy watchfulness in family as well as in personal exercises. As an illustration of this, the following extract, containing a record of this, is given:—

"1816, Nov. 24.—Sabbath evening.—On the 13th instant, the evening was devoted to family fasting and thanksgiving. Since the last opportunity of this nature, this time twelvemonth, one important change in my life has taken place, and there were many things which afforded matter both for humiliation and praise. We were so favoured, that although engaged all the evening, we were not interrupted, and I think we had some token of the Lord's presence. I found much liberty in pouring out my heart to God; and I trust our confessions, supplications, and thanksgivings, were accepted of Him—not on their account, for they are polluted, but being perfumed with the much incense of the great High Priest of our profession."

SUCCESSIVE BEREAVEMENTS.

As it is a high source of consolation to the people of God, in their afflictions, that their great High Priest can, from His experience of trial and suffering, be touched with a feeling of their infirmities, being in all points tempted like as they are, yet without sin, so one way in which the Lord sees meet to fit His servants for the more suitable discharge of some of the duties of their office, is by subjecting them to a course of training in the school of adversity. They are thus taught to sympathize with others in their afflictions, as without this

they could not have done. The poet employed language, the deep meaning of which, as a man who had himself seen much affliction, he knew when he said,

"Fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind."

Such experience also enables the servants of Christ to understand the Scriptures, so much of which is fraught with comfort and encouragement to the afflicted, as they otherwise could not. They thus know the power of the word of God, in the hand of the Spirit, to assuage the deepest sorrows, and can more or less speak from the heart in employing Divine testimonies and promises as a means of comforting wounded souls. Having trodden the same paths, they call others to drink from the streams of consolations by which they have been so sweetly refreshed themselves "in passing through the valley of Baca." This is the truth in the knowledge of which the Apostle sought to have the minds of the Christians at Corinth enlightened, that they might, instead of being discouraged, discern the gracious designs which God had to accomplish by the tribulations through which he and his fellow-labourers had to pass. Hence his words, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Cor. i. 3, 4). Those who have been most honoured as instruments of good in the Church have generally had to pass through severe ordeals of trial. Joseph and Moses, David and Paul, are instances of this. If the history of the Church is examined, either in ancient or in modern times, it will be found to abound with illustrations of this. And we find that this was in a large measure the experience of this servant of Christ. From what is stated in the conclusion of a preceding extract, it will be seen that the youthful minister, in the season of his joy and comfort, had some special anticipation that afflictions were abiding him, produced in his mind by the way in which a part of the word of God had been impressed on his spirit, and with this anticipation his future experience harmonised.

The first breach in Mr Aitken's family, which was succeeded by many others, took place in March, 1825. Mr Aitken has left a record of his exercises under these trying dispensations, which the writer of this once thought of giving in some abridged form; but as an account of such dutiful Christian exercise, under painful dispensations, is rarely furnished so fully, and as the spirit which the subject of our memoir was enabled by grace to display, may be the means of comforting and directing others in their adversities many days hence, it has been judged better to give the records nearly as they have been found in his private diary.

As to this first family bereavement, Mr Aitken writes, at the date of March 28, 1825—

"I have now to observe a trying dispensation with which it has pleased my heavenly father to visit me and my family—the death of my eldest daughter, Jessie. She was seized on the 13th with scarlet fever, and expired on Wednesday, the 23d, at eleven o'clock in the evening. The symptoms became very alarming on Satur-

day, after which there was little or no hope. I had gone south on Wednesday, to assist at Arbroath sacrament, but returned by the mail on Monday, on hearing of her situation, and was glad that I had an opportunity of seeing her in life. From the nature of her affliction, she was able to speak little, but evidently recognized me. On the Saturday, her mother asked her if she was willing to die. She answered, 'I don't know.' To another question—whether she loved Christ—she made the same reply. She asked her, farther, if she wished to go to heaven. She answered, 'Yes.' After I saw her, she was under the influence of strong delirium. I tried often to arouse her to converse, but could scarcely accomplish it. On one occasion, having asked her where she was going, I distinctly heard the word 'Christ;' and I trust she is now with her dear Saviour.

"Though the stroke is very painful—for she was a most lovely and amiable child—yet there are many circumstances connected with it very comfortable; everything that was ordained for her she took pleasantly. . . . It was a mercy that we had so many opportunities of coming to the throne of grace on her behalf; and many prayers were indeed presented for her. Besides the Sabbath and weekly meetings, where earnest intercessions were made, multitudes were engaged in this way in many quarters. J. B. and Mr E. were more than once engaged in the family, and the latter prayed with her little more than an hour before she expired. He mentioned to me, at parting, that those words had been much in his mind all day—'I give unto them eternal life,' &c. About half an hour before she departed, the change evidently approached. I then called her mother, who had lain down with the baby; and while we all surrounded her dying bed, we tried to sing the close of the 23d Psalm, 'Yea though I walk,' &c. It was sung at my mother's death, and we were enabled with much composure to witness the last moments of our dear child, which were very pleasant. A very little before she expired, she held up her mouth to kiss me, in a most extraordinary manner, and, falling quite calm, gently surrendered her soul into the hands of her Redeemer. . . . As to my feelings under this dispensation, they are of a mixed kind. I have been deprived of a very dear and sweet child; but I desire to say, 'the Lord gave,' &c. She wanted but little more than three months of completing her eighth year, and had everything about her calculated to draw out strong affection. She was lovely and pleasant; she had a good understanding, and was making rapid progress at school, where she was much beloved: indeed she had a deep place in the affections of all who knew her. She had the Shorter Catechism distinctly, and had committed to memory, I suppose, fully a third part of the Book of Psalms, and had much facility in repeating them; she was an excellent reader, and often at the head of her class. Her mind was beginning to open: she understood the great outline of the plan of salvation; she could carry home a number of the observations of the sermon, and was endeavouring to pray in her own words. Having directed her, in the best manner I could, to ask the forgiveness of sins, a new heart, preparation for death, &c., she told me that she did ask those things by herself, after having repeated her other prayer, viz., the prayer which Christ taught his disciples. On looking back, I find that she was devoted to God before she saw the light. In presenting her to the Lord in baptism, I was trying to plead the promise, 'I will be thy God and the God of thy seed.' I endeavoured, though with many imperfections, to train her up in the fear of God. While she was with me, she was the child of many prayers; and I feel satisfied that she has gone to the better world, and that she shall be found among Christ's at His coming. On Saturday, at two o'clock, her remains were interred in Foot-Dee Churchyard; and though I had many fears as to my work yesterday, I was carried through in a very comfortable manner—beyond my expectation. In the forenoon I preached from these words, 'But he for our profit;' and in the afternoon from the words of Christ, 'The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?' My gracious God and Father has been very kind to me on this occasion, and I desire to be thankful for it. As to the meaning of the dispensation, though there may be many ends designed by it to be afterwards discovered, yet, as to others, I am not ignorant. 'The Lord has afflicted me in truth and in faithfulness,' and I consider what He has done on this occasion as a very special token of His love to my soul. I stood in much need of something to arouse me. I was become lukewarm and formal, and my soul clave to the dust. I see a peculiar propriety in the particular nature of the affliction. He has touched me in a very tender part; I am ready to think that the death of any of the rest of my children would not have given

me such a pang, and my partner has said the same. We were too fond of this child. She was our first-born, very amiable, and much taken notice of. We were proud of her, and idolized her, and it was become absolutely necessary that she should be taken away from us. 'Chasten thy son while there is yet hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying;' and now my only desire is, that He may not withhold the blessing. And have I not reason to believe that this shall be given? 'Call upon me in the day of trouble,' &c. This is His promise, and on it I desire to rest. I feel perfectly satisfied with what the Lord has done. I would not wish it otherwise. He is righteous and He is good. May I never forget what He has done. If the Lord leave me, I will know that all my goodness will soon be 'as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away;' but my hope is in His word. I trust He will be with me in a special manner on the ensuing solemn occasion [Communion]. It is a new kind of preparation; but, through the Divine blessing, it shall not be in vain. . . . Father of mercies, accept of my grateful acknowledgments for thy kindness on this occasion! May any good impressions which have been made not be quickly erased; but may I be helped to live more to thy glory, and to keep constantly in mind that the time draweth nigh when I must also be laid in the silent grave. 'It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again.' This is my foundation. May my faith and love and every grace grow exceedingly; and, when the time arrives which thou hast appointed for my going hence, may I be enabled to look death in the face without fear, and have an abundant entrance administered to me into the everlasting kingdom of my Lord and Saviour. Amen."

After enjoying a respite from this kind of trial for nearly five years, another family bereavement was measured out in February, 1830, regarding which we find him saying, March 2, 1830—

"The Lord has seen meet to visit us in this family with another painful trial. On Tuesday last, the 23d February, about two in the morning, my daughter Janet was removed—the second of that name. She was ill for about three weeks; but though we had fears as to the issue, we did not think that death was so near, and neither did it seem to be apprehended by the doctor who attended her. It was only about five hours before that we perceived the approach of the last messenger. The symptoms of her complaint resembled that of rheumatic fever; but towards the close of her illness, I rather suspected it was water in the chest. Whatever it was, it was the Lord's messenger to remove her out of this world of sin and trouble; and I desire to say from the heart, 'The will of the Lord be done.' As we looked on her for death for some hours, we had leisure to commit her departing spirit into the hands of her Redeemer; and I think I got some liberty in pleading, 'I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed.' Both her mother and I feel the stroke keenly, for she was a lovely and very sweet child; but I desire to be thankful for the kind support which He has been pleased to afford. We are both sensible that we needed the stroke to arouse us, and we desire to acquiesce in His wise and righteous disposal. I was trying to preach last Sabbath, in the forenoon, from David's exercise, 'I was dumb, I opened not my mouth,' &c., and had considerable freedom; and in the afternoon, on those words of Job, 'He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down.' When I look around me, and think what kind of a world my children are coming into, I feel perfectly satisfied with what has taken place. I feel considerable confidence that my God has taken her home to His heavenly habitation, and I know that she is there unspeakably better, in every respect, than she could have been under my care. Still, a number are continued with us. O for wisdom and grace to train them up while they are spared with us! I feel more and more my inability for this; but I desire to continue instant in prayer, and to use the means in a dependance on His blessing. I had a very agreeable and consolatory letter from my father on this occasion, which refreshed my heart. For such a parent I desire to be thankful; but is it not a still greater mercy that I have my heavenly Father, to whom I can at all times resort, and who knows most perfectly all the circumstances of my case, and how to relieve. May I be kept near Him, and it shall be well!" This child was four years of age at her death.

In little more than a year, the Lord saw meet to visit the family with a third painful stroke, in the removal by death of Mr Aitken's

second daughter, Isabella, an event with which God was pleased to grant a large measure of spiritual comfort. As to this trial Mr Aitken says in his diary, Aug. 17, 1831—

"Of late it hath pleased our heavenly Father to visit us, as a family, with another sore bereavement in the death of my daughter Isabella. She has been distressed for a considerable time with an affection of the heart; but on the 29th of June, at the desire of my father, she was removed to Kirriemuir, and seemed for two or three weeks to improve considerably. But her distress afterwards returned with great violence; and, after enduring much for two weeks, she departed this life on Tuesday evening, August 9, about eight o'clock. Mrs A. and I having been warned, got forward about a week before; and though it was painful to see her in such affliction, yet the circumstances of her removal were truly comfortable. I shall not here put on record what she said—they are to be found in a separate paper; but it was highly satisfactory. We have every reason to think that she has made a happy exchange from this world of sin and sorrow to the land of perfect purity and bliss. She was perfectly resigned to the Divine will—willing to go at God's call, and humbly trusting in the death of her Redeemer. Being naturally of a reserved disposition, I had expected no such consolation. I cannot sufficiently admire the great kindness of God to us herein. When I yet think of it I am filled with joy. It is a high encouragement to parents in sowing the seed, although the fruit does not immediately appear. It was a great satisfaction to us that, since she died from home, it was in my father's house. All was kindly ordered as to circumstances, and I desire to say, 'It is well.' May we be excited to lay to heart the warning personally, and to be more diligent with those who are still spared with us!"

To this dispensation Mr Aitken again refers in what he records of his exercise the last day of this year in a very delightful strain of reflections and statement of attainment—

"Dec. 31, 1831.—Again it hath pleased a gracious God to bring me very near the close of another year; and this night I was led to devote an hour or two in attempting a review of what is past, and in looking forward, not to another year, but to eternity. In looking back, I perceive much cause to adopt the language of David—'I will sing of mercy and of judgment: to thee, O Lord, will I sing.' We have not wanted trials, but they have been richly mixed with mercy. The death of our dear Isabella is the most prominent event of the bygone season; but when I think of all the circumstances, and particularly the good reason which she gave us to believe that she was going to a better place, I feel not only resigned, but thankful. My first, my only desire for my children is that they may become the children of God; and if I can see this I am satisfied. Lord, teach me wisely to use the means and to wait for the blessing!"

A brief memoir of this young believer, written by her brother James—of whom we will afterward have some account to give,—was published first in the *Youth's Magazine* for April, 1843, and afterwards transferred to the pages of the *Original Secession Magazine* in July, 1849, from which we here add a few extracts containing some of her sayings as death approached, referred to already as omitted in the diary—

"She was seized with severe attacks of the palpitation, which weakened her greatly, but which generally left her for a while in a calm and easy state. It was after one of these that the following conversation took place. Her father, approaching her bed, asked, 'Do you think yourself dying Isabella?' With some emotion, she answered, 'Yes!' 'Have you any fears at the prospect of death?' 'Some.' 'Why?' 'I did not seek Christ as I should have done.' 'But what is the only ground of your hope?' 'Christ's death.' 'Have you any message to your sister or brothers?' 'Tell them,' she replied, with earnestness, 'to seek Christ early, and not to wait till they turn ill.' He asked if she had anything else to say, thinking, perhaps, she might wish some farewell gift to be given from her; but her concern was for their souls, and she answered, 'Tell them not to play on the Sabbath

as they used to do.' 'Are you willing to leave your father and mother?' 'Yes.' 'Where are you going do you think?' 'To be with Christ.' 'Would you wish to return again to this world?' 'O no! I am going to a better place—to depart and be with Christ is far better.'

"It was most delightful to witness her mild submission under her distressing complaint. Few hasty words escaped her lips, and when, in the extremity of her pain, they sometimes did, she afterwards spoke of it with grief. On one occasion, when suffering acutely under a severe attack of palpitation, her mother was sympathising with her, when, with difficulty, she meekly said, 'It is not too much: He will not suffer me to be tried above what I am able to bear.' Her father, anxious to see if she possessed one special characteristic of the people of God—grief for past sin,—one day said to her, 'Are you not sorry, Isabella, for many things you did wrong?' She answered, 'Yes; I neglected many precious opportunities and good advices, but I have been called at the eleventh hour.' At another time she said, 'I was very careless before my present distress; I was too fond of the world.' To her mother, one evening, she said, 'I was not able to be at church last Sabbath.' It was replied, 'You will get another church soon.' 'Yes,' she added, 'it is aye (ever) Sabbath there.' Her father said, 'There remaineth a rest'—the keeping of a Sabbath,—'Yes,' she said, 'for the people of God.' 'Are you, think you, among that class?' 'I trust I am, through Jesus Christ, the Mediator.'

"In this spirit of lively hope she waited her end, which rapidly drew near. She was of a timid disposition; and it was surprising as well as comforting to her friends to behold the fortitude with which she viewed the approach of death. She seemed so much taken up with the glory of Immanuel's land, as entirely to overlook the dark valley that lay between. The day before her death, she said to her mother, her countenance beaming as if she already felt that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory, 'I never felt happier than I have been this afternoon.'

"Though often sorely tossed before, her end was calm and peaceful, and she seemed to retain her faculties to the last. When her sorrowing friends had collected to witness her departure, her grandfather repeated a part of the 45th Psalm. He unwittingly passed over two lines. In a low whisper, she immediately put them in.

'Her fellow-virgins following,
Shall unto thee be brought.'

These were the last words she spoke. Soon after, her redeemed soul left this vale of tears, and joined the company of her fellow-virgins who have been brought into the palace of the King."

In less than a year Mr and Mrs Aitken were called to witness the severe sufferings and death of another beloved child—their son John, who was taken away in his ninth year, after enduring much bodily affliction. As to this painful dispensation, Mr Aitken says in his diary, at the date of 10th April, 1834—

"On the 31st of last month, it pleased our heavenly Father to remove our dear John from this vale of tears. As his sufferings were very severe, particularly the last day, we felt his departure to be a relief. 'The storm is changed into a calm,' and I trust he has got to the desired haven and place of rest. I think I had a good deal of freedom in pleading for his soul, and feel considerable satisfaction with respect to his safety. As he was in such severe distress, he was scarcely able to hold any conversation with us; but, while raving, it was pleasing to observe how his mind was directed to things that were good, and on one occasion he said to me that he was going to Abraham's bosom, and answered some questions very readily as to the way of salvation. Though he was not a forward child as to learning, his mind seemed to be opening of late. He was not obstinate, but very affectionate: he was early devoted to the Lord. We endeavoured to sow the seed of divine truth in his mind, and now it becomes us to leave him with God. Five* of my children are now gone before me to the other world, and I look forward with some measure of confidence to a comfortable meeting with them in a better place. The Lord knew that I was in many respects unfit for such a weighty charge, and He has

* This is including a twin-sister, who was still-born.

taken them under His own protection. Lord, it is well; yes, it is well; and, so far as I know my heart, I have not a single murmuring thought with respect to this dispensation. It is pleasing also that Mrs A. has been hitherto so well supported. 'He will not suffer to be tempted above that ye are able,' &c.

"James and Margaret witnessed the whole scene of their brother's death. At the time they were affected; but oh, how soon does it wear off! I am particularly anxious about James, he is so thoughtless and indisposed to that which is good. But what can I do except endeavour to use the means for his good, and continue instant in prayer to God? His time is not yet come"—it will be immediately seen that the time soon came blissfully when the saving change was very manifest in this youth,—"but my time is always ready. I feel that I am often sinfully anxious about futurity, with which I have nothing to do. The Lord has given me a lesson of the folly of this with respect to John. May I be enabled to profit by it!"

The next bereavement to which Mr Aitken was subjected, though not in his own family, was one which could not fail to be deeply felt. It was that of his venerable and honoured father. Though of him it might eminently be said that he came to his grave "in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season," being so near a relation, and much beloved and esteemed, his death could not but make a deep impression. Of Mr Aitken's exercise and feelings on this occasion we have the following record:—

"October 11, 1834.—Another month has elapsed, and a very important change has occurred—the death of my venerable and *beloved father*. He died on the 24th September, but I did not get forward till the 25th, having only heard that morning that his end seemed to be approaching. For about sixteen hours he was unable to speak; but he seemed to be sensible, at times at least, of what was going on. His last audible words were, 'I shall soon be well,' and I trust his expectations have now been fully accomplished. The whole of the day on which he died was spent in devotional exercises beside him; and my sister, who was alone, as to relations, speaks of it as having been a very comfortable day. He expired about seven o'clock in the evening, without a struggle, and while those words were sung, in the 91st Psalm at the close, 'With length of days unto his mind I will him satisfy,' &c. My sister has been wonderfully supported, and everything outwardly was conducted in the most comfortable manner. Many tokens of respect were shown in every quarter, and I desire to see it as the accomplishment of those words, 'Them that honour me, I will honour.' He was enabled to follow Christ, in the way of cleaving to His cause, in trying circumstances, and suffered much obliquely in consequence; but as to him and his brethren, the Lord has clearly wiped away the reproach, and done them much good. 'O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee.' While at Kirriemuir, I felt considerable comfort. His word was sometimes very precious. I have often found it suitable and refreshing in times of trouble. On the morning after I went, the 25th of Genesis occurred in my ordinary reading, and verses 8 and 11 were particularly sweet. After coming in from the funeral, I felt relief in pouring out my heart into the bosom of my heavenly Father; and I desire, through grace, to cleave to Him for ever, believing that, though now my parents both have left me, the Lord will not leave me till He has done that which He has spoken to me of; but oh, how soon do good impressions wear off, and how early am I disposed to return to vanity! Lord, pardon my folly, and save and deliver me from all evil. My weakness is great; lead me not into temptation. Prepare me for all that is thy will, and in thy time receive me to thyself. One of my elders, William Edward, is very ill, and I much fear is about to leave us. This will be a heavy blow, for we can ill spare such. 'Help Lord,' &c. But I have no time to add more at present: it is Saturday night, and late. May the Lord grant that to-morrow will be a good day!—a day of the lifting up of the light of His countenance. Deliver me from all disquieting thoughts."

This worthy Christian, and dutiful, wise, and prudent office-bearer in the Church, of whom Mr Aitken has often spoken to the writer in the highest terms, to whom reference is made in the conclusion

of the preceding extract, was left to be a continued comfort and stay to Mr Aitken for some twelve or thirteen years after this. And though it would have been in its more appropriate place in a previous section of the memoir, the thoughts and exercise which were put on record by his pastor of this beloved friend and helper in the work of the Lord, at the time of his death, may be here introduced.

December 12, 1847.—After mentioning some other deaths in the congregation, it is added—

"But the heaviest bereavement we have ever sustained is the death of William Edward, my old and venerable elder. He was with me from the beginning, and was long as a staff in my hand; but he had reached the good old age of four score, or a little beyond it, and we ought not to murmur at his removal. 'He had served his generation by the will of God,' and it was time that he should be permitted 'to fall asleep.' He was one of the best men I ever knew—intelligent, judicious, distinguished for piety, prudence, and good temper, and everything that was calculated to render a Christian amiable and beloved. For nearly thirty-seven years that I have sat with him in the Session, I had never the slightest difference with him; and now, when he is gone, I feel as if I had lost my best earthly friend; but I desire to be thankful for what the grace of God made him, and that he was so long spared with us, often in much weakness and affliction. Owing to certain circumstances, I had not such frequent opportunity of seeing him in his last illness as I could have wished; but what conversation I had with him was very comfortable and refreshing. He said, with much freedom and satisfaction, that everything was settled before he lay down; and I have no doubt, from his whole conversation and circumstances, that he referred to his spiritual condition. He spoke many things, from time to time, which were very agreeable to his children and grandchildren, giving his dying blessing. He died as he lived—a great, honourable, and respected Christian, and has got off the stage without a stain. For all this I desire to be thankful, and now I will look unto the Lord. I am sometimes disposed to feel sorrowful at being left behind, and one of my first thoughts on hearing of the event was, what Peden is said to have uttered while sitting on the grave of Cameron, 'O to be wi' thee Ritchie!' but we must wait the Lord's time. He has been very kind to me for a long period. If I am spared till to-morrow, I shall have completed the fifty-eighth year of my life, and I will trust Him for support in what yet remains. I see many difficulties before me; but perhaps they may never come, and I may get easier over them than I think. Let me remember Christ's words, 'Take no thought for the morrow.' 'Lord, I believe,' &c. To-day I preached from Psalm xxxvii. 37, 'Mark the perfect man, and behold,' &c., and had considerable comfort in my work; but, alas! sin cleaves to all I do, and I feel that I must be constantly repairing to the blood of sprinkling for pardon and cleansing."

There are few things that tend more to comfort the heart and strengthen the hands of a pastor than a prudent, godly, and active eldership, or that tend more to build up and give stability to a congregation. When the elders go before and are ensamples to the flock in every good work—when they are faithful and loving in their exhortations and warnings—attentive in visiting the sick, and in encouraging young and old to all that is lovely and dutiful,—the work and burden of the minister are greatly lightened. It was Mr Aitken's privilege to have such a coadjutor in Mr Edwards, and we believe also in some others, for many years of his public ministry. And in the extract as to this elder we have a striking proof of Mr Aitken's affection and esteem for his godly office-bearers, and an instance of the intensity of that Christian friendship which subsists between kindred spirits who have laboured long together in the work of the Lord.

The next family bereavement which the great Disposer saw meet

to measure out to Mr Aitken, notwithstanding the large measure of spiritual comfort connected with it, was such as behoved to be deeply felt. It was the death of his son James—a youth of very high promise—at the very commencement of public work in the Church, for which he was eminently fitted, both by natural gifts and acquirements, and, so far as man can judge, high degrees of gracious attainment. It will be seen in a previous part of this memoir that his father had felt deep concern about the spiritual state of James, and it was not till his seventeenth year that he became decidedly thoughtful about spiritual and divine things. In that year, however, his experience was such as indicated very distinctly that he had become the blessed subject of a saving change.

The circumstances of the death of Mr James Aitken, of whom such high expectations of future eminence and usefulness were formed, are the following :—After finishing his course of college education with success, having carefully and with much prayer given his best consideration to the subject, he resolved to devote himself to a course of preparation for the work of preaching the everlasting gospel. Being taken on trials for licence, according to an appointment of Synod, before his last session at the Divinity Hall, so that he might be licenced as soon after as possible, he was sent forth as a preacher by the Presbytery to proclaim the gospel, in October, 1844. The first Sabbath after being licenced, he preached at Kirriemuir to the congregation to which his venerated grandfather had so many years ministered. Such was his acceptability as a preacher, that that congregation embraced the earliest opportunity of taking steps to obtain him for their pastor. Their petition to the Presbytery for a moderation was readily granted, and appointed to take place on the 19th of December. But in the inscrutable orderings of Divine Providence, after preaching eight Sabbaths, he was seized with a severe rheumatic fever, which it was hoped at first would yield to medical treatment; but symptoms of inflammation of the heart soon manifested themselves, and bade defiance to all the means employed for the removal of the distress. The call came out from Kirriemuir when his recovery was very doubtful. When this was told him on his bed of deep affliction, he said, “All is well, and all will be well; the will of the Lord be done.” After severe suffering, in the endurance of which he was blessed with great patience, he was enabled to meet the last enemy undismayed, yea, triumphant. On Saturday morning, December 28 (in the words of the writer of his memoir), he “slept in Jesus.”

As to this dispensation, we find the following statement in Mr Aitken's diary :—

“January 23, 1845.—A great change has now taken place in my family. Our dear James has been taken from us; but so much of the Lord's kindness has been shown in the dispensation, that, though human hearts are often sore pained, we are disposed rather to rejoice than to mourn. On the 20th of last month, having heard that he was getting worse, I went south to Dundee, and was with him for a week previous to his death. He died on the 28th, at nine in the morning. The week was a trying one, but, in many respects, truly pleasant. He was sore afflicted, but most patient and resigned to the Lord's will. His faith continued firm in the midst of the struggle, and seemed to rise higher as the crisis drew near. I cannot here

enter on the particulars, though they are *in relentiis* elsewhere. It was a most comforting scene, and has made a deep impression on many."

There was a remarkable measure of comfort connected with the death of this young servant of Christ. He was not only singularly upheld himself in resignation to the will of God, and in the confidence of a blessed hope, but his parents and relations were also filled with the consolations of the Spirit. "I know not," says one in relation to this, "which most to admire—the grace of God, as displayed in the triumphant death of our young friend, or the same grace manifested in supporting his worthy parents, and enabling them to bow so meekly and submissively to the rod." "Never," says another, "did he feel more the charm which God can throw around the house of mourning." Such was the degree in which God was pleased to vouchsafe the light of His countenance to the mourners who accompanied the remains of Mr James Aitken from Dundee to Aberdeen, and the sweetness of their spiritual converse by the way, that, according to the testimony of one of the group of friends, it was more like a season of rejoicing than of mourning. "A word fitly spoken," says Solomon, "is like apples of gold in pictures of silver;" and there are records of Christian experience and attainment that can scarcely be too often re-set as patterns to copy, and proofs of the power of divine grace full of encouragement to others. We do not, therefore, feel that it is a work of supererogation to re-exhibit a few of the things recorded of the experience and exercise of this youth, as given in a pretty lengthened memoir of him, contained in the first series of the *Original Secession Magazine* for January and March, 1849, as they will thus be presented to the minds of a class of readers who would not have otherwise seen them, or profitably pressed anew on the attention of some who have already had them under their consideration.

A fear lest he should be chargeable with inconstancy, after being deeply impressed with spiritual things, is strongly expressed in these words, contained in a letter to a greatly esteemed and beloved relative—

"When I wrote at the time of the sacrament," he says, "I was in great terror lest my convictions should be—as they have too often proved—'like the morning cloud, and the early dew which passeth away.' . . . My judgment is convinced; but I cannot feel about the only thing in this world that merits feeling. Often have I thought, when my heart was like to burst with joy in reading the gracious invitations of the gospel, that all was now right with myself, that at last I had found peace in believing, that my life was hid with Christ in God, and that whatever difficulties and trials I had to meet with, I should have strength from God to support me under them all, and at last a glorious reward; but alas! ere many days passed over my head, my joy was turned into mourning. That evil and bitter thing sin interposed and damped all, and has sometimes made me think of giving over in despair."

"One of the most gratifying evidences that he had tasted that the Lord is gracious," says the writer of the memoir referred to, "was his earnest desire to impart to others some spiritual gift. . . . A Sabbath evening class, chiefly intended for those who had no opportunity of parental instruction, was opened in his father's meeting-house; of that he became a zealous and devoted teacher. A prayer meeting was commenced among the young men on Sabbath morning;

of this, also, he became a very regular and active member. About the same time he joined a week-day prayer meeting of more advanced persons."

We find him, also, walking in the steps of his father and other godly persons, by entering into personal covenant with God. And there is a freshness about the concluding part of the personal covenant found in his repositories that shows the high attainments in knowledge and experience to which he had reached—

"I take heaven and earth to witness that I desire to be saved in the method of free grace; that I distrust my own resolutions and my own strength; that I make all my purposes and promises in Christ's strength; that I rest not at all in my promise made to Him, but in His promise made to me, that He will never leave nor forsake me. O Lord Jesus, in thee only have I righteousness and strength! Be surety for thy servant for good, and undertake for all that God requireth of me, and for all that I have promised to Him. Dispose my affairs, O God, in a manner which may be most subservient to thy glory and my own true happiness; and when I have done, and borne thy will upon earth, call me home at what time and in what manner thou pleasest; only grant that in my dying moments, and in the near prospect of eternity, I may remember these my engagements to thee, and employ my latest breath in thy service. And thou, O Lord, when thou seest the agonies of dissolving nature upon me, remember this covenant too, even though I should be incapable of recollecting it. Look down, O my heavenly Father, with a pitying eye upon thy languishing, thy dying child; place thine everlasting arms underneath me for my support; put strength and confidence into my departing spirit, and receive it to the embraces of thine everlasting love! Welcome it to the abodes of them that sleep in Jesus, to wait there that glorious day, when the last of thy promises to thy covenant people shall be fulfilled in their triumphant resurrection, and that abundant entrance which shall be administered to them into thine everlasting kingdom. And when I am thus numbered among the dead, and all the interests of mortality are over with me for ever, if this solemn memorial of my transactions with thee should fall into the hands of any surviving friends, may it be the means of making serious impressions upon their minds. May they read it not only as my language, but as their own, and learn to fear the Lord my God, and with me put their trust under the shadow of His wings for time and for eternity!"

The reason which he gives for keeping a diary is very satisfactory—

"I feel," says he, "that I must make a more constant use of the assistance afforded by a diary in keeping up the life of religion in my soul. How truly may it be said of it as of learning, 'Drink deep, or taste not!' There is a general desire in the heart of man to content himself with a little religion—as much as will barely keep his conscience from being troublesome, and give him some little ground of hope for eternity. Hence the evil report which many who have gone but a short way bring of the good land. O Lord, may my own experience of this tendency be a warning to me! Lead me henceforth to a closer walk with thee. O for a heart burning with love to thee—for more zeal for thee in the world! Why am I so cold in thy cause? Why am I so slow in thy service? O Lord, forgive me, and heal the soul."

As further means of attaining to prosperity in the Christian life, it appears that he resolved to devote *one hour* every morning and evening to secret devotion, and, if possible, a short time in the middle of the day; and, besides these regular periods, he was in the habit of occasionally devoting whole days to special self-examination and personal humiliation. To one of these seasons he looked back with comfort on his death-bed, as Jacob did to Luz in the land of Canaan where God met with him and blessed him.

The breathings of his soul, as found recorded in his diary, are such as indicate that he had the spirit of the office which he was to fill for so brief a time largely given him. They are uttered in such words as these—

"A sacred trust has been committed to me. O that I may have grace to be faithful! 'Lo, I am with you alway,' is a word on which I would desire to lean. . . . O that that passage may be made effectual by the Spirit of all grace! O Lord, give me some souls in this place as a crown of rejoicing! But I would desire to look beyond men to God, and keep that day mainly in view when the Lord shall appear with all His saints."

Of the sayings of this youth on his death-bed we give the following specimens:—"I know not," said he one day to his mother frequently, "what may be the issue of this distress, but, O, I think I will be made better by it; O, I *must* be made better! Pray! O pray that I be made more holy!" "You are worse," said she one day, "James, than ever I saw you before." "Do you think so?" he replied. "Well, perhaps the Lord is about to take me away; but surely I would never complain of that. It would be a great happiness to be early taken away to heaven." "I have no great joy," said he once and again, "but I have great peace: my hope is resting on this, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.'" "It is a solemn thing to die," but added, very sweetly, "it is not terrible." "O, I am very helpless," said he one night to his father, as he was raising him up. "Yes," he replied, "but you have a divine helper near you." "Ay," said he, "and I have another helper." He asked whom he meant. "You," said he. "Well, James," he replied, "I sought to bring you to Christ. It was my highest ambition, and I believe it has been gratified." "O," he replied, "I owe much to you—more than I can express; but," he added, "*only as an instrument.*" More than once he asked his forgiveness for all the pain he had given him in his youthful days; and added, "Labour on, father, and pray on, and you may yet have the honour of seeing all your family gathered to heaven."

These sayings might have been more largely rehearsed, by which this godly, honoured youth, though dead, yet speaketh; and who knows how many may profit by this re-statement of his words, and of the fruits of divine grace, to which he was so great a debtor!

The last family bereavement to which Mr Aitken was subjected was the removal, after a lingering illness, of his very amiable and greatly beloved daughter Margaret. The record as to this event in the diary is as follows:—

"October 29, 1854.—On the 29th current it pleased God to remove my daughter Margaret out of this world by death, I trust, to her Father's house above. She has been in bad health for more than a year. She sometimes appeared to get better, and was removed to Banchory and Midholm, but relapsed after partial recovery, and died at home on Friday last. We feel very thankful that she got home and died in our own house. I had thus an opportunity of conversing with her; and I am very thankful for the encouragement I and others had that she was not a stranger to true godliness. She was a very amiable and pleasant child, and has left the world without a stain. She spoke a good deal during her last illness as to the grounds of her hope, and seemed to rest entirely on Christ and His righteousness. She was very humble and retiring. Some of her last words were, 'My beloved is mine and I am

his.' I think this is another of my dear friends taken away from the evil to come. It is a heavy loss to us, especially to her mother and sister; but 'the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

As to this beloved daughter, Mr Aitken had also recorded the following notes in another place:—

"On Wednesday morning, I was repeating these words, 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet,' &c. She replied, 'O these are sweet words!' Again, 'I did not think my life was to be so short, and yet,' she added, 'it is not so very short; but I have not improved it as I ought to have done; but,' she repeated, with much feeling, 'He hath said, *None perish that trust in Him.*'"

"On Thursday, again, we had some conversation. 'Though,' she said, 'we have cast ourselves upon Him, it is a solemn thing to think of entering into eternity.' She lamented that she had not lived so near God as she ought, and spoke of thoughtlessness and carelessness as to the things of God and her soul. Having left the room for a little, on my return I found her and her mother engaged in conversation, and she asked me where that passage was—'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us,' &c. The passage, being turned up, was read, and we had a good deal of discourse as to spiritual things; and though, owing to the cough and difficulty of breathing, she was able to say little, she seemed to enter feelingly into what was said. A number of passages were repeated and commented on, such as, 'Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord,' &c. (Phil. iii. 8); 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners; of whom I am chief' (1 Tim. i. 15). The ground of a sinner's hope was unfolded, with the warrant of faith, on which she said, 'This is far better than all the doctors can do for me.' Much anxiety was manifested, and fear of being mistaken; but she appeared quite distinct as to the only foundation of a sinner's hope for eternity, and clung to it. She spoke of the high privileges she had enjoyed above many others, and her consequent responsibility. Her mother and I joined in prayer with her, in which exercise she seemed to take a deep interest."

Mr Aitken's own loss by this bereavement was great, as this daughter had devoted herself to his aid when suffering from pain in his eyes in every way possible. The spirit of patient submission with which she bore her protracted affliction was very remarkable, and her latter end was indeed peace. But though the stroke could not fail to be deeply felt, such a spirit of calm cheerfulness pervaded the whole family under this dispensation as the writer of this, whose privilege it was to be present, never before witnessed on a similar season of sorrow.

MEETING OF THE UNITED ORIGINAL SECESSION SYNOD.

At Main Street Church, Glasgow,
17th May, 1858.

The Synod of United Original Seceders met, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. James Smith, Pollockshaws, from John xiii. 34—"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

After sermon, the Synod was constituted with prayer by Mr Smith, Moderator. The roll being called, the following ministers answered to their names:—The Rev. Thomas Manson, Perth; Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, Colmonell; Rev. Professor M. Murray, Glasgow; Rev. John Graham, Kilmarnock; Rev. George Stevenson, Kil-

winning; Rev. George Roger, Auchinleck; Rev. John Robertson, Ayr; Rev. James Smith, Pollockshaws; Rev. Dr Blakely, Kirkintilloch; Rev. James Smellie, Stranraer; Rev. Robert Braash, Birsay; Rev. W. F. Aitken, Midholm; Rev. John Ritchie, Shottsburn; Rev. E. Ritchie, Thurso; Rev. W. Robertson, Dundee; Rev. Thomas Hobart, Carluke; and Rev. John Barr, Coupar-Angus—with Peter Ross, Perth; William Struthers, Glasgow; W. Campbell, Auchinleck; James Campbell, Ayr; James Russel, Pollockshaws; Allan Stirling, Kirkintilloch; John Robertson, Stranraer; Micah Matthew, Kirriemuir; John Coupar, Thurso; and Alexander Smellie, Carluke—ruling elders.

It was reported by the Presbytery of Perth and Aberdeen that they had admitted the Rev. John M'Beath, Castleton, with his congregation, into connection with the Synod; and it was agreed that his name be added to the roll. It was also reported by the Ayr Presbytery that they had ordained Mr Andrew Anderson, preacher of the gospel, at Ballylintagh, Ireland, and his name was added to the roll. It was moved and agreed to, that the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, Colmonell, be appointed Moderator in room of Mr Smith, and Mr Ritchie took the chair accordingly. Appointed the following members a Committee of Bills and Overtures:—the Moderator, Mr Manson, Professor Murray, Mr Graham, Mr Stevenson, Mr Roger, and Mr Hobart—with Peter Ross, William Struthers, and Micah Matthew, ruling elders—to meet this evening at the close of the present sederunt. Appointed the following members a Committee of Funds, viz., Mr Stevenson, Mr Roger, Mr John Robertson, and Dr Blakely—with James Campbell, John Robertson, and George Jack, ruling elders—Mr Robertson to be Convener,—to meet to-morrow morning at half-past 9 o'clock. A series of regulations anent the order of business was read by Dr Blakely, which had been agreed to be transmitted by the Presbytery of Glasgow to the Synod. After consideration, and making several amendments upon the regulations, it was agreed to adopt them *ad interim*. The regulations are as follow:—

I. That the Synod shall meet daily at 10 o'clock A.M.; adjourn at 1 P.M.; resume at half-past 1 P.M., and continue sitting till 4 P.M. Meet again at 6 P.M., and continue sitting not later than 10 P.M.

II. That the Court shall be constituted exactly at the hour of meeting, the roll called, and that members entering afterwards shall intimate their presence to the Clerk; and members requiring to leave, shall first obtain the permission of the Moderator.

III. That, for the dispatch of routine business, one or more sederunts shall be appointed when the Synod shall meet in Committee, to mature matters of detail, so as to render the meetings of Synodical Committees less necessary; and

IV. That the Moderator and Clerk shall strictly observe and keep the time of meeting and adjournment, and that the fixed order shall not be departed from, except in such special cases as shall be deemed warrantable by the formal and deliberate judgment of the Court. Mr Anderson was appointed to conduct devotional exercises to-morrow forenoon, after the Synod is constituted. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 18th May, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Mr Anderson afterwards engaged in devotional exercises. Sederunt as formerly, with the addition of the Rev. Robert Craig, Kirriemuir, and Rev. John M'Kay, Aberdeen—with James Meldrum, Colmonell; John Johnstone, Kilmarnock; John Knox, Kilwinning; John Gowanlock, Midholm; John Smith, Shottsburn; George Jack, Dundee;

Alexander M'Intosh, Coupar-Angus; and William Buyers, Aberdeen—ruling elders. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. The Clerk gave in the Report of the Committee of Bills and Overtures, which was approved, and the recommendations of the Committee adopted. The Committee obtained leave to meet again this afternoon at 4 o'clock. The Clerk intimated that he had received reasons of dissent by Mr Stevenson against the suspension of Mr Brown by Synod at its last meeting. The Synod appointed Mr Graham, Dr Blakely, and Mr Smellie a Committee to answer these reasons, and to report to a future sederunt.

The Synod then proceeded to take up the decision of last meeting of Synod, 20th August, 1857, anent Mr Brown's protest, laid on the Synod's table on the 19th August. The Synod agreed to put the following question to Mr Brown, viz., Whether he has obtemperated the decision of the Synod then come to in his case? The Moderator having put the question to Mr Brown, he gave in the following answer:—

"Moderator—In imitation of our Lord and Master, when interrogated by His judges with the view of eliciting self-accusations, and with my eye upon one immeasurably lower in excellence, yet really excellent, when he was placed as I am this day—I mean the late Professor Bruce of Whitburn—I return the following answer to the question put to me:—

"The only evidence I am here to give concerning myself is, that I am not guilty of refusing submission to this Court '*in the Lord*,' inasmuch as I am ready, when called upon, to stand my trial, according to the laws of the Church, at the time fixed for that trial, and to show that I am not guilty of the charge brought against me *in the libel* now pending, founded on that which I have published in defence of the profession which I have ever made, as stated in the Judicial Testimony of the Synod."

The Synod, considering the answer now given by Mr Brown to the question as not a satisfactory answer, agreed to appoint the following members—Mr Roger, Mr Robertson, Mr Smellie, and Mr Hobart—a Committee—Mr Robertson to be Convener,—to make inquiry, and, if necessary, to summon witnesses to give evidence in the matter, and to report to a future sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again at half-past 1 o'clock. Closed with the benediction.

Same place and day, half-past 1 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. The Synod agreed to hear the representation and appeal of the Rev. A. Brown, Adam Square, Edinburgh, transmitted by him, through the Moderator, to the Synod. The representation was read by the Clerk, and members having expressed their opinions generally in reference to it, the Synod considered it inexpedient to come to a decision upon it at the present sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again at 6 o'clock P.M. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. The Clerk gave in and read an additional Report of the Committee of Bills and Overtures. The Report was approved, and the recommendations of the Committee adopted. Granted leave to the Committee to meet again to-morrow afternoon at 4 o'clock. The Synod then proceeded to take up the libel lying on the table, which had been served upon the Rev. Archibald Brown, Adam Square, Edinburgh, of which in former minutes. The major proposition and the first count of the

libel, Mr Brown's answers to the major proposition and the first count, and the replies of the Committee of Synod to Mr Brown's answers to the major proposition and the first count, were read. Mr Brown was heard in defence upon the major proposition and the first count. The members of Court then proceeded to give their judgment, in the order of the roll, in regard to the major proposition and the first count, during which, the hour of adjournment having nearly come, it was agreed to postpone the further consideration of the matter till the forenoon sederunt to-morrow. Mr Roger gave in the Report of the Committee appointed to make inquiry as to whether Mr Brown had obtemperated the decision come to at last meeting of Synod in his case. The Report is as follows :—

“Main Street Church, 18th May, 1858.

“The Committee appointed to make inquiry as to whether Mr Brown had obtemperated the decision of last meeting of Synod met, and was opened with prayer by Mr Robertson. Present with him, Mr Roger, Mr Smellie, and Mr Hobart. After conversation, the Committee agreed to summon Mr James Sinton, Edinburgh, and Mr John Low, Kirkaldy, to give evidence in the case, and agreed to meet again to receive that evidence this afternoon at 4 o'clock. Closed with prayer.”

“Same place and day, 4 o'clock P.M.

“The Committee met, according to adjournment. Mr Roger reported that the summonses, of which in former minute, had been issued and duly served upon the parties by the Synod's officer, at the instance of the Committee. After waiting for some time, the Committee found that the parties summoned did not compare, when the Committee agreed to report to the Synod, and to recommend that, should said parties be present in the Synod at the evening sederunt, they should be summoned by the Moderator, *apud acta*. Closed with prayer.”

The Report was approved, and the recommendation of the Committee adopted. In terms thereof, the Moderator summoned Mr James Sinton, *apud acta*, to give evidence in the case of the Rev. A. Brown, Edinburgh. Mr Sinton declined; and the Moderator having warned him of the consequences of his declining, that he would thereby be regarded as guilty of contumacy, he still declined. Mr John Low was called, but was not, so far as known, present in the house. His case was reserved. The Synod continued the Committee upon this matter, and appointed them to report to a future sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 19th May, 1858, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the addition of William Caldwell, Ballylntagh, ruling elder. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Resumed consideration of the libel, left unfinished at last night's sederunt. The members of Court who had not expressed their mind on the major proposition and the first count, proceeded to do so in the order of the roll. It was then agreed to put the question—Whether the first count is, in the judgment of the Court, *proven* or *not proven*? and the vote being stated, and the roll called, 26 voted *proven*, and 4 *not proven*. Agreed to resume the case of the libel at to-morrow forenoon's sederunt, and that the call to the Rev. E. Ritchie, Thurso, by the congregation of Toberlony, be taken up after the adjournment. Adjourned, to meet again at half-past 1 o'clock. Closed with the benediction.

Same place and day, half-past 1 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and took up the call to the Rev. E. Ritchie, Thurso, from the congregation of Toberlony, Ireland. The Clerk read

the minutes of Ayr and Perth and Aberdeen Presbyteries referring the case to the Synod. The call was also read, from which it appeared that 91 members, male and female, in full communion, had signed the call, and 23 adherents. Reasons for the translation by the congregation of Toberdony, and answers to these reasons by the congregation of Thurso, were likewise read. Messrs James Colvin and James Cochrane appeared as commissioners from the congregation of Toberdony, and Mr John Coupar commissioner from Thurso. The commissioners on both sides were heard, and the members of Court put questions to the commissioners. The commissioners were then declared to be removed. Mr Ritchie afterwards addressed the Court, when he stated to the effect that he gave a deliberate and decided preference to the call from Toberdony. The members of Court then proceeded to give judgment in the case, during which, the hour of adjournment having come, it was agreed to delay the further consideration of the matter till the evening sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Resumed consideration of the call from Toberdony to Mr E. Ritchie, jun., left unfinished at the forenoon sederunt. The members of Court who had not expressed their mind upon the case, now did so in the order of the roll; after which the vote was stated—*translate* or *not translate*. Before taking the vote Mr John Robertson engaged in prayer. The roll being called, and votes marked—the votes being equal—it was carried by the casting-vote of the Moderator, *translate*; wherefore the Synod did, and hereby do, translate the Rev. E. Ritchie, jun., from Thurso to Toberdony, dissolve the relation subsisting between him and the congregation of Thurso, and instruct the Presbytery of Ayr to take the necessary steps for his induction into the pastoral oversight of the congregation of Toberdony. The commissioners from Toberdony acquiesced in this decision, and took instruments in the Clerk's hands, and craved extracts. The Moderator then addressed the commissioners from both congregations. The supply of the congregation of Thurso, now declared to be vacant, was reserved for future consideration. Dr Blakely, Convener of the Committee appointed to prepare answers to the reasons of dissent by the Rev. G. Stevenson, Kilwinning, with John Harwood, John Smith, and Thomas Brownlee, ruling elders, against the decision of Synod at its last meeting in Mr Brown's case, having given in the answers, it was agreed that the reasons and answers should now be read in Court. The Clerk read them accordingly, and they were ordered to be kept *in retentis*. The Synod Treasurer's Report on the funds was next taken up and read by the Clerk. After conversation, it was agreed that the Report be taken up again, and be considered more fully in a committee of the whole house. In the meantime, a cordial vote of thanks was given to Mr Stevenson, the Synod Treasurer, for his efforts in promoting the funds. It was agreed that the Report be printed in the Magazine along with the Synod minutes. The Report of the Committee on the Magazine was then read, and, after conversation, it was also agreed to take up this Report at a subsequent sederunt in a committee of the whole house. The cordial thanks of the Synod were voted to the Editor and Treasurer of the Magazine for their exertions in promoting its interests. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 20th May, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the exception of John Knox and George Jack, ruling elders. The

minutes of former sederunt were read, corrected, and approved. Resumed consideration of the case of the libel, left unfinished at a former sederunt. The second count of the libel, Mr Brown's answers to the second count, and the replies of the Committee of Synod to Mr Brown's answers, were read. Mr Brown was heard in defence upon the second count. The members of Court then proceeded to give their judgment in regard to this count, during which, the hour of adjournment having come, it was agreed to resume the consideration of the matter at the next sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again at half-past one o'clock. Closed with the benediction.

Same place and day, half-past 1 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and resumed consideration of the case of the libel, left unfinished at the former sederunt. The members of Court that had not expressed their mind on the second count, now did so in the order of the roll. Upon the name of the Rev. E. Ritchie, jun., being called—doubts having been expressed as to the propriety of his taking part in the proceedings of the Synod, on the ground of the Synod's having dissolved his relation to the congregation of Thurso, as it did by its decision in the Thurso case last night—after reasoning, Mr Ritchie agreed not to take part in the proceedings in the meantime. Mr Coupar, elder from the congregation of Thurso, agreed to act in the same manner as Mr Ritchie had done. After all the members had expressed their minds upon the second count, it was agreed to put the question—Whether, in the judgment of the Court, the second count of the libel is *proven* or *not proven*? and the vote being stated, and the roll called, 20 voted *proven*, and 1 *not proven*. It was agreed that the business of the libel be again taken up at to-morrow forenoon's sederunt, and that the Synod meet in a committee of the whole house from 6 to 8 o'clock this evening, after which the meeting shall be public during the remainder of the sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the exception of Messrs James Meldrum, John Johnstone, James Campbell, John Smith, and William Caldwell, ruling elders, who obtained, through the Moderator, leave of absence. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. The Synod then resolved itself into a committee of the whole house, according to agreement come to at the forenoon sederunt, when Mr Stevenson took the chair. It was agreed to take up the report of the Scheme for the Liquidation of the Debt on Congregational Property. The Report was given in by Mr Smith, Convener of the Committee. After lengthened conversation on the important matters brought forward in the Report, from which it appeared that there was a good prospect of the scheme being carried into effect, it was agreed that the Committee be instructed to prepare the draft of a motion embodying the suggestions made by the members, and to present it to the Synod at a future sederunt. Mr Robertson, Convener of the Committee for the allocation of the funds collected for the Mutual Assistance Scheme, read the Report of the Committee; but as the hour for the Synod's meeting in public had come, it was agreed to delay the consideration of the details of this Report till a future sederunt.

The Synod then resumed, and the Moderator took the chair. Called for the Report of the Committee on Home Missions, which was read, by Dr Blakely, Convener of the Committee. In connection with this Report, a memorial from the Main Street (Glasgow) Original Secession Sabbath School Association, in regard to the appointment of a Home Missionary or Catechist, was read by the Clerk. The members of Court having expressed their mind on the important subjects brought

forward in the Report, it was unanimously agreed to adopt the Report, and that the thanks of the Synod be given to the Convener and the Committee. It was also agreed to re-appoint the Committee, and instruct them to carry out the proposals made in the Report, keeping in view the instructions formerly given to the Committee. The Synod further empowered the Committee to correspond with the several ministers and Sessions of the body anent Home Missionary work in their congregations, and appointed a collection to be made in all the congregations for the Home Mission during the month of July next. The Report was ordered to be printed in the Magazine along with the Synod minutes. The Presbytery of Ayr requested and obtained leave to meet at the close of the present sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 21st May, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the exception of Messrs William Buyers, William Campbell, Alex. Smellie, and Micah Matthew, ruling elders, who obtained, through the Moderator, leave of absence. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Resumed consideration of the case of the libel, left unfinished at the afternoon sederunt yesterday. The third count of the libel, Mr Brown's answers to the third count, and the replies of the Committee of Synod to Mr Brown's answers to the third count, were read. Mr Brown was heard in defence upon the third count. The members of Court then proceeded to give their judgment in regard to this count, during which, the hour of adjournment having come, it was agreed to resume the consideration of the matter at next sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again at half-past 1 o'clock. Closed with the benediction.

Same place and day, half-past 1 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment. It was moved and agreed to, that Mr Manson be appointed to preach at Thurso, and intimate to the congregation the decision of the Court come to in their case at a former sederunt.

Resumed consideration of the case of the libel, left unfinished at the forenoon sederunt. The members of Court that had not expressed their mind on the third count, now did so in the order of the roll; after which it was agreed to put the question—Whether the third count is, in the judgment of the Court, *proven* or *not proven*? and the vote being stated, and the roll called, 9 voted *proven*, and 4 *not proven*. It was agreed to resume the consideration of the libel at the forenoon sederunt on Tuesday next week. Adjourned, to meet again on Monday first, the 24th current, at half-past 6 o'clock evening; and that the Synod shall then resolve itself into a committee of the whole house, to take up the Report of the Committee on the Debt Liquidation Scheme, Report on the Funds, the Magazine Report, Report anent Testimonies, and the Report of the Committee of Supplies. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 24th May, half-past 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Rev. James Smith, Pollockshaws, in absence of the Rev. E. Ritchie, Colmonell, Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the exception of the Rev. R. Brash, Birsay, and Alexander M'Intosh, ruling elder. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. The Synod then resolved itself into a committee of the whole house, according to agreement come to at last meeting of Synod, when Mr Stevenson took the chair. The Clerk read a petition from the congregation of Kirkaldy anent supply, the prayer of which

was granted. Took up the Synod Treasurer's Report on the Funds. The state of the Synod Fund was first read. Agreed that the sum of £10 be granted to the Rev. James Anderson, Carluke, out of this fund. Instructed the Clerk to write to those congregations that have not made collections this year to the Synod Fund—viz., Kilmarnock, Thurso, Ballylintagh, and Toberdony—to do so without delay, and agreed that in future circulars be sent by the Clerk to all congregations, settled and vacant, as to the time when collections are to be made for the several schemes of the Synod, as fixed by this Court. Congregations were also enjoined to be punctual in forwarding their collections when made to the Synod Treasurer, and to keep in mind that the Synod's financial year ends on the 10th of April, on or before which day all collections or subscriptions for the Synod's Fund, and particularly the Mutual Assistance Scheme, should be in the hands of the Treasurer. The Clerk read a petition from the congregation of Ballylintagh, Ireland, requesting assistance in building a church. After conversation, it was agreed to grant £25 for aiding the congregation in this work, and remit to the Presbytery of Ayr to settle the conditions on which the sum is to be given.

The state of the Mutual Assistance Scheme was next considered. It was agreed to appoint a Committee—consisting of Mr Roger, Dr Blakely, and Mr John Robertson—Dr Blakely to be Convener,—to prepare and circulate a brief statement among all the congregations in regard to the scheme, directing particular attention to the importance of increased exertions being made in support of the scheme. In regard to the fund for aged and infirm ministers, it was agreed that a collection should be made annually for it by all the congregations throughout the body in the month of January. The Students' Fund was reserved for further consideration at a future sederunt. The Clerk read the Report anent the Testimonies belonging to the Synod; and it was agreed that the parties who had obtained copies of the Testimony should forthwith be applied to for the sums due by them for the Testimonies received. The Magazine Report was next taken up. It embodied abstracts prepared by the Treasurer, Mr Jack, showing the extent of the Magazine's circulation; the particulars of the Treasurer's receipts and disbursements for the year, from 31st March, 1857, to 31st March, 1858; the financial state of the periodical at the present time, and the support it receives from the respective congregations of the body; and concluded with an earnest appeal, addressed to ministers and others, to do what in them lay to increase the circulation of the Magazine. Mr Manson having stated that the labours of superintending the Magazine were interfering much with his ministerial duties, earnestly requested to be relieved from the Editorship. The Synod, while unanimously expressing a deep sense of the able and efficient manner in which Mr Manson had conducted the Magazine, felt constrained to urge him to continue in the office of Editor; but, in order to lighten the labour connected with the management, it was moved and agreed to, that Dr Blakely be appointed joint Editor. In this arrangement Mr Manson cordially concurred. The Synod then resumed, when the Clerk gave in the Report of the Committee, which was adopted. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 25th May, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Rev. James Smith, Pollockshaws, in absence of the Rev. E. Ritchie, Colmonell, Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the addition of Peter Ross, John Johnstone, and Alexander Smellie, ruling elders. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. In reference to the Students' Fund, the consideration of which was delayed at last night's sederunt, it was now moved and agreed to re-appoint the Committee for the ma-

nagement of the fund—consisting of Professor Murray, Mr Manson, Dr Blakely, and Mr John Stevenson, the Synod's Treasurer—with instructions to restrict their grant to those who are recognized as students by the Presbyteries in whose bounds they reside, and who are attested as such by the clerks of their respective Presbyteries.

Proceeded to take up the case of the libel, left unfinished at the afternoon's sederunt on the 21st current. The fourth count of the libel, Mr Brown's answers to the fourth count, and the replies of the Committee of Synod to Mr Brown's answers to the fourth count, were read. Mr Brown was heard in defence upon the fourth count, during which, the hour of adjournment having come, it was agreed to resume the further consideration of the case at the next sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again in half-an-hour. Closed with the benediction.

Same place and day, half-past 1 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and resumed consideration of the case of the libel, of which in former minutes. Mr Brown was further heard in defence upon the fourth count. In the course of his defence, Mr Brown referred to a report that his answers and defences had been circulated in the interval between the last and the present meeting of Synod, and in regard to which he gave in the following statement:—

"Mr Brown stated, with the view of clearing himself from the charges of disingenuity brought against him, from the fact that copies of his 'Answers and Defences' were printed and circulated, in addition to those handed to members of Synod. That a member of his congregation has a brother in a printing-office. Him Mr Brown employed to get his answers and defences printed. Mr Brown intimated to the printer the number of copies wanted for the Synod. These were sent to Mr Brown, and by him put into the hands of the Clerk of Synod. Additional copies were thrown off by the printer, at the desire of the member of his congregation before mentioned, and by him circulated; but this was done without the consent or approbation of Mr Brown."

The members of Court then proceeded to give their judgment upon the fourth count of the libel, during which, the hour of adjournment having come, it was agreed to delay the further consideration of the matter till the evening sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, 6 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Rev. James Smith, Pollockshaw, in absence of the Rev. E. Ritchie, Colmonell, Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved.

Resumed consideration of the case of the libel, left unfinished at the former sederunt. The members of Court that had not expressed their mind on the fourth count, now did so in the order of the roll; after which it was agreed to put the question—Whether the fourth count is, in the judgment of the Court, *proven* or *not proven*? and the vote being stated, and the roll called, 15 voted *proven*, and 2 *not proven*. The Synod then proceeded to take up the fifth count. The fifth count of the libel, Mr Brown's answers to the fifth count, and the replies of the Committee of Synod to Mr Brown's answers to the fifth count, were read. At this stage, the hour of adjournment having come, it was agreed to delay the further consideration of this case till the forenoon sederunt to-morrow. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 26th May, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion

of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Rev. James Smith, Pollock-shaws, in absence of the Rev. E. Ritchie, Colmonell, Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Resumed consideration of the case of the libel, left unfinished at last night's sederunt. Mr Brown was heard in defence upon the fifth count. The members of Court then proceeded to give their judgment in regard to the fifth count; after which it was agreed to put the question—Whether, in the judgment of the Court, the fifth count is *proven* or *not proven*? and the vote being stated, and the roll called, 15 voted *proven*, and 2 *not proven*. Proceeded to take up the sixth count of the libel. The sixth count of the libel, Mr Brown's answers to the sixth count, and the replies of the Committee of Synod to Mr Brown's answers to the sixth count, were read. At this stage, the hour of adjournment having come, it was agreed to resume the consideration of the case at next sederunt. Adjourned, to meet again at half-past 1 o'clock. Closed with the benediction.

Same place and day, half-past 1 o'clock P.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment; and resumed consideration of the 6th count of the libel, left unfinished at the forenoon sederunt. Mr Brown was heard in defence upon the sixth count. The members of Court then proceeded to give their judgment upon the sixth count; after which it was agreed to put the question—Whether, in the judgment of the Court, the sixth count is *proven* or *not proven*? and the vote being stated, and the roll called, 18 voted *proven*, and 3 *not proven*. All the counts of the libel having been gone over and adjudicated upon, the Clerk read at this stage the several counts *seriatim*,* and the Moderator intimated—1st,

* The counts of the libel are as follow :—In so far as, in a pamphlet published or caused to be published by you, entitled "Revival of Family Religion, in opposition to the Sabbath-School System," you—

First, Publish and promulgate statements unjust and injurious to the character of those ministers or individuals of them who stood by their profession and had a place in the Synod previous to its disruption in 1852.

Second, That in said pamphlet, you the said Archibald Brown do ascribe evil and unworthy motives and ends to members of the Supreme Court in the discharge of their judicial functions.

Third, You the said Archibald Brown have deeply injured the character of the Synod by grossly misrepresenting the resolutions of Synod anent family religion and Sabbath-school teaching in relation to the Divine law.

Fourth, You the said Archibald Brown have also deeply injured the character of the Synod by grossly misrepresenting the resolution of the Synod anent family religion and Sabbath-school teaching in relation to our received and sworn-to principles, as exhibited and maintained in our Judicial Testimony.

Fifth, You the said Archibald Brown have in said pamphlet published and promulgated various injurious and unfounded insinuations, deeply affecting the honour and integrity of the Synod of United Original Seceders, as such, and individual members thereof.

Sixth, The preceding offences, or part thereof, have been greatly aggravated by you the said Archibald Brown as committed by a minister of the gospel against your brethren in the ministry, and against the Courts of Christ's House, of which you are a senior member. In so far as these offences, or part thereof, have been frequently repeated—have been done deliberately in written and published documents, addressed to the community at large while you had full and free access to the Courts of the Church: In so far as those offences, or part thereof, have been committed after you had subjected yourself to frequent judicial dealing, after your having been found again and again chargeable with such or similar offences, and in disregard to judicial remonstrance and prohibition: In so far as, after the formal suppression of an entire pamphlet entitled "Plea for a Seceder Free Press," and the voluntary retraction of the whole charges therein contained against the editor "as unfounded and injurious to his personal and ministerial character," accompanied with an expression of deep regret for the wrong thus done, and also the retraction of all the charges contained in said pamphlet "against the Synod, as such, and individual members thereof:" In so far as, after being dealt with in regard to the recent pamphlet specially complained of in the preceding counts of the libel in a committee of the whole house, and having had time granted for deliberation in regard to the matters complained of in the pamphlet under

That the Court had found the first count of the libel *proven*; 2d, That the Court had found the second count of the libel *proven*; 3d, That the Court had found the third count of the libel *proven*; 4th, That the Court had found the fourth count of the libel *proven*; 5th, That the Court had found the fifth count of the libel *proven*; 6th, That the Court had found the sixth count of the libel *proven*. Wherefore the Synod did, and hereby do, find the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth counts of the libel served upon the Rev. Archibald Brown, Adam Square, Edinburgh, *proven*. Against these findings Mr Stevenson, Mr Smith, and Mr A. Anderson dissented, for reasons to be afterwards given in, and took instruments in the Clerk's hands, and craved extracts. The Synod appointed Dr Blakely, Mr Smellie, and Mr Hobart a Committee—Dr Blakely to be Convener—to answer these reasons when given in. It was agreed to delay further procedure anent the libel in the meantime, and that the Synod take up at its next sederunt the decision of last meeting of Synod, 20th August, 1857, suspending *sine die* the Rev. A. Brown, Adam Square, Edinburgh, from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions; and that the Report of the Committee of Synod, appointed at a former sederunt to obtain evidence as to whether Mr Brown had obtemperated that decision, be then called for, and also a petition of certain members of the Session of the congregation of Glasgow having reference thereto. Adjourned, to meet again this evening at 6 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place and day, 6 o'clock p.m.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Rev. James Smith, Pollockshaw, in absence of the Rev. E. Ritchie, Colmonell, Moderator. Sederunt as formerly. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved.

Proceeded to take up the decision of last meeting of Synod, 20th August, 1857, anent the Rev. A. Brown, Adam Square, Edinburgh. The Clerk read the protest of Mr Brown against the sentence of Synod suspending him *sine die* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions, and the decision of the Synod anent said protest. It was agreed at this stage to take up the petition of certain members of the Session of the congregation of Glasgow, requesting the Synod to reconsider the decision above referred to. The Clerk read the petition, and Mr David Scott, elder, was heard in its support; after which, the members of Court put questions to Mr Scott in regard to the subject embraced in the petition. The parties were then declared to be removed. It was moved and agreed to, that the Synod, having heard the petition, and Mr David Scott in support thereof, agree to allow the petition to lie upon the table until the Synod pronounce its judgment upon the decision referred to.

Called for the Report of the Committee appointed to take evidence as to whether Mr Brown had obtemperated the decision of Synod, 20th August, 1857, suspending him *sine die* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions. Mr Roger gave in the Report as follows:—

"That the Committee, in order to attain the end for which they were appointed, felt it to be necessary to appoint two of their number—viz., Mr Roger and Mr Hobart—as a Commission, to proceed to Edinburgh at such time as might be most suitable, and to obtain the evidence required; that said Commission had fulfilled the

judicial investigation, you did in open Court repeat or aggravate the above offences, or part thereof, by fixing special charges upon members of the Court, and by announcing in the most deliberate manner your determination to abide by said pamphlet "out and out," or in words to that effect,—through which things in themselves, and by reason of their several aggravations, you have deeply grieved the brethren, disturbed without cause the peace of the Church, given reason to the enemy to blaspheme, and detracted from the honour and esteem of those who are pledged with you in the same covenanted profession, and with whom you are solemnly bound to co-operate and defend in the work of the Lord.

duty laid upon them, and presented the following record of their proceedings to the Committee :—

" At Edinburgh, 22d May, 1858.

" The Commission—consisting of the Rev. George Roger, minister of the congregation of United Original Seceders, Auchinleck, and Clerk of the Synod of United Original Seceders, and the Rev. Thomas Hobart, minister of the congregation of United Original Seceders, Carlisle—appointed by the Committee of Synod empowered to take evidence as to whether the Rev. A. Brown, Adam Square, Edinburgh, had obtemperated the Synod's decision of 20th August, 1857, suspending him *sine die* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions, met this day, and proceeded to take evidence accordingly.

" Compeared Miss Mary Hutton, residing at Burghmuirhead, near Edinburgh, and matron of the Institution there, who declared her readiness to make affidavit. Upon being examined, answered as follows :—

" Is acquainted with the Rev. A. Brown, Adam Square, Edinburgh ; has heard Mr Brown preach regularly during the last six months ; saw him dispense the sacrament of the Lord's Supper on Sabbath, the 25th day of April, 1858 years ; heard him on Sabbath, the 9th day of May current, on which day he gave an introductory lecture on the 1st chapter of the Epistle to the Romans : All which is truth.

(Signed)

" MARY HUTTON.

" GEORGE ROGER, Commissioner.

" THOMAS HOBART, Commissioner.

" Compeared Mrs James Scott, residing at 6, Bread Street, Edinburgh, who declared her readiness to make affidavit. Upon being examined, answered as follows :—Knows the Rev. A. Brown, Adam Square, Edinburgh ; heard him preach on one or other of the Sabbaths in October, 1857, but uncertain as to which of them : All which is truth.

(Signed)

" Mrs JAMES SCOTT.

" GEORGE ROGER, Commissioner.

" THOMAS HOBART, Commissioner.

" The Commission have only further to state that they examined two other parties—a mother and daughter,—who, they were informed, were prepared to give evidence in the case. When examined, these parties, in the frankest manner, testified that they had heard Mr Brown preach frequently during the last six months, but that they did not like to sign any paper in regard to the matter. The Commission, considering the above evidence sufficient, did not think it necessary to take any further steps in the business. The Committee approved of the proceedings of the Commission, and agreed that it be presented to the Synod."

On the ground of the above Report, the Synod found that they had satisfactory evidence that Mr Brown had not obtemperated the decision of Synod, 20th August, 1857, suspending him *sine die* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions. At this stage, it was moved and agreed to, that the Synod appoint a Committee—consisting of the Moderator, Mr Manson, Professor Murray, Mr Graham, and Mr Stevenson—to meet with Mr Brown, and to converse with him in regard to the painful position in which he now stands to the Court. The Committee accordingly retired, along with Mr Brown, to the adjoining session-house, for the purpose specified. In the absence of the Moderator, Mr Robertson, Ayr, was called to the chair. Took up the Report anent the Library belonging to the Synod. After conversation, it was agreed to appoint a Committee—consisting of Professor Murray, Dr Blakely, Mr John Ritchie, Mr Hobart, and Mr John Stevenson, the Synod's Treasurer—to inquire into the state of the Library, and to make provision for its being

removed to Glasgow. Proceeded to consider the Report of the Committee appointed by Synod to prepare the draft of a scheme to regulate the supply of the vacancies in existing circumstances. Dr Blakely gave in the Report, and Mr Roger presented the draft of a scheme of appointments which had been prepared for the coming year. The Report was approved, and ordered to be printed in the Magazine along with the Synod minutes. In consequence of the decision of Synod in the Thurso case, the scheme of appointments was remitted to the Committee of Supplies.

The Committee appointed to converse with Mr Brown having returned to Court, reported that they had held a lengthened, earnest, and calm conversation with Mr Brown in regard to the subject of the libel, and his not obtemperating the Synod's deed of suspension, when Mr Brown stated that he was unable to make any concession, and could not in conscience make any acknowledgement, or express any regret, in regard to any sentiment or mode of expression in his pamphlet which he had employed. After lengthened and deliberate consideration of the whole case, the Synod appointed the following members—viz., Professor Murray, Mr Roger, Mr John Robertson, and Dr Blakely—a Committee, to retire and prepare a deliverance in reference to the case. During the absence of the Moderator and Clerk of Synod, the chair was taken by Mr Manson, and Mr Smellie was appointed to act as Clerk. Took up an overture from the Presbytery of Glasgow anent annual reports from Sessions to the Synod. Members having expressed their mind regarding the overture, it was agreed to transmit it to the Presbyteries to report upon it to next meeting of Synod. The overture transmitted is as follows:—

"Whereas, in accordance with the spirit of Presbyterian Church polity and the scriptural rights of church members, the pastoral tie is formed between a minister and congregation by a formal call, containing certain stipulations on their part, together with acceptance and solemn promises on his part; and whereas the Presbytery, at ordination, takes both parties bound, in the sight of God and men, to fulfil mutually their respective engagements; and whereas Presbyterial visitation has, in the practice of the Church, fallen into desuetude, and no other formal inquiry has been substituted in its place regarding the fulfilment of respective obligations; and whereas the superior courts have no direct means of knowing the state of congregations until cases of difficulty are formally submitted for adjudication; and whereas great injury may be done to a pastor or congregation ere the superior courts may be aware,—It is humbly overtured by the Presbytery of Glasgow, that the following, or some such queries in schedule form, be annually filled up by each Session, signed by the Moderator and Clerk, and laid before the Presbytery of the bounds at its regular meeting, immediately previous to the meeting of Synod, for transmission to the superior court:—

- "1. State the usual Sabbath services; the frequency and seasons of observing the Lord's Supper.
- "2. The usual amount of pastoral visitation and diets of catechising, and also whether the elders attend to sick visitation and otherwise.
- "3. State the number of prayer meetings in the congregation, and how conducted.
- "4. State what Sabbath or week-day classes are kept in connection with the congregation, and how conducted and attended.
- "5. State what special means are being employed to make the rising generation acquainted with the distinctive principles of the Original Secession Church.
- "6. Whether any, and what means are being employed for reclaiming those who are living in the neglect of divine ordinances.
- "7. Whether church members are regular in their attendance upon the ordinary means of grace and observation of the sacraments.
- "8. Whether, on the whole, vital godliness seems to be declining or progressing.
- "9. Whether the congregation manifests a special interest in the general welfare of the body, by cheerfully giving supply to vacant congregations, by making all the collections ordered by the Synod, and attending generally to the pecuniary interests of the Church.
- "10. Whether the congregation is punctual in meeting these pecuniary engagements to their own pastor.
- "11. What allowance is granted for sacramental and travelling expenses in visitation or attending the courts of the Church.
- "12. Whether there is a manse, or, where there is none, what provision is made for the accommodation of the minister.
- "13. What means are being employed to diffuse intelligence through the press, so as to counter-

act immoral and injurious publications, and to support such as are established in defence of the truth.

"The queries, as agreed to, to be printed in schedule form, issued by the Synod Clerk, filled up by each Session, and returned to the Clerk of each Presbytery for transmission to the Synod."

The Committee appointed to prepare a deliverance in the case of Mr Brown having returned, Mr Robertson took the chair, and the Clerk read the deliverance as follows:—

"That the Synod, having found the libel against the Rev. Archibald Brown, Adam Square, Edinburgh, proven in all its counts—having also found that Mr Brown has not obtempered the decision of Synod, 20th August, 1857, suspending him *sine die* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions, 'with certification, that should Mr Brown be found to have persevered in violating the sentence of suspension, he shall then be declared to be no longer a minister of this Church'—having further found that he has contumaciously disregarded said decision,—find that the offences with which Mr Brown has been chargeable are such as would warrant deposition, yet deem it sufficient, for the ends of edification, and with the view of leaving the way open for Mr Brown's restoration, to continue the sentence of suspension *sine die* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions, to dissolve the pastoral relation between him and the congregation of Adam Square, Edinburgh, and to drop his name from the roll."

At this stage, the hour of adjournment having come, it was moved and agreed to, that, in consideration of the importance of proceeding with the case now before the Court, particularly as several members declared that they were under the necessity of leaving at an early hour to-morrow, the present sederunt should be continued. The Court continued sitting accordingly. The Clerk read again the deliverance which had been prepared by the Committee. After reasoning, Mr Stevenson proposed the following amendment, which was seconded by Mr Anderson:—

"Whereas the Synod, on the 22d May, 1857, laid a judicial prohibition on the Rev. Archibald Brown, minister of the congregation of United Original Seceders, Adam Square, Edinburgh, absolutely prohibiting him from ministering to his congregation till next meeting in August; whereas said prohibition was unnecessary, unjust, and grievous to be borne; whereas, for refusing to submit to said prohibition, Mr Brown was suspended by the Synod *ad interim*; whereas Mr Brown's protest against this first suspension, together with the suspension *sine die* that followed, all spring from, and hinge upon the foresaid unnecessary, unjust, and grievous prohibition; and further, whereas it is now proposed to continue the sentence of suspension, to dissolve the pastoral relation between Mr Brown and his congregation, and to drop his name from the roll, it is hereby moved, that, inasmuch as Mr Brown's first suspension, and also that which followed, were inflicted for non-compliance with a prohibition of Synod, which was unnecessary, unjust, and grievous to be borne, and inasmuch as Mr Brown consequently was not guilty of rebellion against the authority of the Synod, nor of the sin of contumacy, the Synod do rescind the existing sentence of suspension *sine die*, and repon him in his place as a minister of this Church.

"And whereas Mr Brown, in a pamphlet entitled 'Revival of Family Religion in opposition to the Sabbath-School system,' though not guilty of aught worthy of libel, has nevertheless used very strong and unguarded expressions in regard to the Synod and its resolution, and especially in regard to individual ministers, and has declined to state any regret for such expressions, it is further moved, that the matter of said pamphlet be issued by Mr Brown's being admonished to be more tender and guarded in expressing his sentiments in time to come."

After reasoning, Dr Blakely, Mr Smellie, Mr William Robertson, and Mr Hobart entered their dissent against that part of Mr Stevenson's motion which refers to

removed to Glasgow. Proceeded to consider the Report of the Committee appointed by Synod to prepare the draft of a scheme to regulate the supply of the vacancies in existing circumstances. Dr Blakely gave in the Report, and Mr Roger presented the draft of a scheme of appointments which had been prepared for the coming year. The Report was approved, and ordered to be printed in the Magazine along with the Synod minutes. In consequence of the decision of Synod in the Thurso case, the scheme of appointments was remitted to the Committee of Supplies.

The Committee appointed to converse with Mr Brown having returned to Court, reported that they had held a lengthened, earnest, and calm conversation with Mr Brown in regard to the subject of the libel, and his not obtemperating the Synod's deed of suspension, when Mr Brown stated that he was unable to make any concession, and could not in conscience make any acknowledgement, or express any regret, in regard to any sentiment or mode of expression in his pamphlet which he had employed. After lengthened and deliberate consideration of the whole case, the Synod appointed the following members—viz., Professor Murray, Mr Roger, Mr John Robertson, and Dr Blakely—a Committee, to retire and prepare a deliverance in reference to the case. During the absence of the Moderator and Clerk of Synod, the chair was taken by Mr Manson, and Mr Smellie was appointed to act as Clerk. Took up an overture from the Presbytery of Glasgow anent annual reports from Sessions to the Synod. Members having expressed their mind regarding the overture, it was agreed to transmit it to the Presbyteries to report upon it to next meeting of Synod. The overture transmitted is as follows:—

"Whereas, in accordance with the spirit of Presbyterian Church polity and the scriptural rights of church members, the pastoral tie is formed between a minister and congregation by a formal call, containing certain stipulations on their part, together with acceptance and solemn promises on his part; and whereas the Presbytery, at ordination, takes both parties bound, in the sight of God and men, to fulfil mutually their respective engagements; and whereas Presbyterial visitation has, in the practice of the Church, fallen into desuetude, and no other formal inquiry has been substituted in its place regarding the fulfilment of respective obligations; and whereas the superior courts have no direct means of knowing the state of congregations until cases of difficulty are formally submitted for adjudication; and whereas great injury may be done to a pastor or congregation ere the superior courts may be aware,—it is humbly overtured by the Presbytery of Glasgow that the following, or some such queries in schedule form, be annually filled up by each Session, signed by the Moderator and Clerk, and laid before the Presbytery of the bounds at its regular meeting, immediately previous to the meeting of Synod, for transmission to the superior court:—

- "1. State the usual Sabbath services; the frequency and seasons of observing the Lord's Supper."
- "2. The usual amount of pastoral visitation and diets of catechising, and also whether the elders attend to sick visitation and otherwise."
- "3. State the number of prayer meetings in the congregation, and how conducted."
- "4. State what Sabbath or week-day classes are kept in connection with the congregation, and how conducted and attended."
- "5. State what special means are being employed to make the rising generation acquainted with the distinctive principles of the Original Secession Church."
- "6. Whether any, and what means are being employed for reclaiming those who are living in the neglect of divine ordinances."
- "7. Whether church members are regular in their attendance upon the ordinary means of grace and observation of the sacraments."
- "8. Whether, on the whole, vital godliness seems to be declining or progressing."
- "9. Whether the congregation manifests a special interest in the general welfare of the body cheerfully giving supply to vacant congregations, by making all the collections ordered by Synod, and attending generally to the pecuniary interests of the Church."
- "10. Whether the congregation is punctual in meeting these pecuniary engagements to their own pastor."
- "11. What allowance is granted for sacramental and travelling expenses in visiting and attending the courts of the Church."
- "12. Whether there is a manse, or, where there is none, what provision is made for the habitation of the minister."
- "13. What means are being employed to diffuse intelligence through the press, so as to

act immoral and injurious publications, and to support such as are established in defence of the truth.

"The queries, as agreed to, to be printed in schedule form, issued by the Synod Clerk, filled up by each Session, and returned to the Clerk of each Presbytery for transmission to the Synod."

The Committee appointed to prepare a deliverance in the case of Mr Brown having returned, Mr Robertson took the chair, and the Clerk read the deliverance as follows:—

"That the Synod, having found the libel against the Rev. Archibald Brown, Adam Square, Edinburgh, proven in all its counts—having also found that Mr Brown has not obtempered the decision of Synod, 20th August, 1857, suspending him *sine die* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions, 'with certification, that should Mr Brown be found to have persevered in violating the sentence of suspension, he shall then be declared to be no longer a minister of this Church'—having further found that he has contumaciously disregarded said decision,—find that the offences with which Mr Brown has been chargeable are such as would warrant deposition, yet deem it sufficient, for the ends of edification, and with the view of leaving the way open for Mr Brown's restoration, to continue the sentence of suspension *sine die* from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions, to dissolve the pastoral relation between him and the congregation of Adam Square, Edinburgh, and to drop his name from the roll."

At this stage, the hour of adjournment having come, it was moved and agreed to, that, in consideration of the importance of proceeding with the case now before the Court, particularly as several members declared that they were under the necessity of leaving at an early hour to-morrow, the present sederunt should be continued. The Court continued sitting accordingly. The Clerk read again the deliverance which had been prepared by the Committee. After reasoning, Mr Stevenson proposed the following amendment, which was seconded by Mr Anderson:—

"Whereas the Synod, on the 22d May, 1857, laid a judicial prohibition on the Rev. Archibald Brown, minister of the congregation of United Original Seceders, Adam Square, Edinburgh, absolutely prohibiting him from ministering to his congregation till next meeting in August; whereas said prohibition was unnecessary, unjust, and grievous to be borne; whereas, for refusing to submit to said prohibition, Mr Brown was suspended by the Synod *ad interim*; whereas Mr Brown's protest against this first suspension, together with the suspension *sine die* that followed, all spring from, and hinge upon the foresaid unnecessary, unjust, and grievous prohibition; and further, whereas it is now proposed to continue the sentence of suspension, to dissolve the pastoral relation between Mr Brown and his congregation, and to drop his name from the roll, it is hereby moved, that, inasmuch as Mr Brown's first suspension, and also that which followed, were inflicted for non-compliance with a prohibition of Synod, which was unnecessary, unjust, and grievous to be borne, and inasmuch as Mr Brown consequently was not guilty of rebellion against the authority of the Synod, nor of the sin of contumacy, the Synod do rescind the existing sentence of suspension *sine die*, and repute him in his place as a minister of this Church.

"And whereas Mr Brown, in a pamphlet entitled 'Revival of Family Religion in opposition to the Sabbath-School system,' though not guilty of aught worthy of libel, has nevertheless used very strong and unguarded expressions in regard to the Synod and its resolution, and especially in regard to individual ministers, and has declined to state any regret for such expressions, it is further moved, that the matter of said pamphlet be issued by Mr Brown's being admonished to be more tender and guarded in expressing his sentiments in time to come."

After reasoning, Dr Blakely, Mr Smellie, Mr William Robertson, and Mr Hobart entered their dissent against that part of Mr Stevenson's motion which refers to

former decisions of Synod, as incompetent to be put, for reasons to be afterwards given in, took instruments in the Clerk's hands, and craved extracts. Mr Stevenson and Mr A. Anderson were appointed a Committee—Mr Stevenson to be Convener—to answer these reasons when produced. Before putting to the vote the proposed *deliverance* and the *amendment*, Mr John Ritchie engaged in prayer. The vote was then stated—*deliverance* or *amendment*; and the roll being called, and votes marked, 12 voted for *deliverance*, and 2 for *amendment*. The *deliverance* was accordingly declared to be carried. Wherefore, and in terms thereof, the Synod did, and hereby do, continue the sentence of suspension *sine die* passed upon the Rev. Archibald Brown, Adam Square, Edinburgh, from the exercise of his ministerial and judicial functions, dissolve the pastoral relation between him and the congregation of Adam Square, Edinburgh, and drop his name from the roll. Against this decision Mr Stevenson and Mr A. Anderson dissented, for reasons to be afterwards given in, and took instruments in the Clerk's hands, and craved extracts. Professor Murray, Mr Roger, and Mr John Robertson, were appointed a Committee—Mr Roger to be Convener—to answer these reasons when produced. Mr John Ritchie also dissented from the decision, for reasons to be given in, and took instruments in the Clerk's hands, and craved extracts. The above Committee, of which Mr Roger is Convener, were appointed to answer Mr Ritchie's reasons when given in. The Moderator then intimated the decision of the Court to Mr Brown. Mr Brown protested against the decision, and laid his protest upon the Synod's table, took instruments in the Clerk's hands, and craved extracts. The Synod ordered the protest to be kept *in relents*. Adjourned, to meet again to-morrow forenoon at 10 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Same place, 27th May, 1858, 10 o'clock A.M.

The Synod met, according to adjournment, and, after praise and reading a portion of the Word of God, was constituted with prayer by the Rev. James Smith, Pollockshaws, in absence of the Rev. E. Ritchie, Colmonell, Moderator. Sederunt as formerly, with the exception of the Rev. W. F. Aitken, Rev. John Ritchie, Rev. John Barr, and Rev. John M'Kay—with Messrs John Johnston, John Gowanlock, and Alexander Smellie, ruling elders. The minutes of former sederunt were read and approved. Mr Smith asked and obtained leave *ex gratia*, having been absent at last night's sederunt, to dissent from the decision then come to in Mr Brown's case. Appointed the Rev. E. Ritchie, jun., to preach at Edinburgh on Sabbath first, and to intimate to the congregation there the decision of the Court in the case of the Rev. Archibald Brown. Agreed to allow the overture anent the rescinding of the resolution on Sabbath Schools, and the petition from the elders in Arbroath congregation on the same subject, to lie on the table till a future meeting. The Clerk read the letters he had received from the Clerks of the other Presbyterian bodies anent the payment of printed papers laid on their tables. After conversation in regard to the payment of the printing of the papers which Mr Brown had given to the members of Court, the Synod, considering all the circumstances of the case, and especially that Mr Brown had circulated his second paper under the impression that it would be regarded as a Synod document, and considering, at the same time, that Mr Brown has informed the Court that a member of his congregation had got a number of copies of his answers and defences printed and circulated in addition to those required by the members of Court, which had been done without Mr Brown's consent and approbation, agree that, *ex gratia*, the accounts for printing be paid to Mr Brown, reserving, at the same time, the right of the Synod to take whatever steps it may see cause in regard to the part which the member of Mr Brown's congregation referred to has taken in the matter.

Proceeded to take up the Report of the Committee appointed to communicate with

the Trustees of the late Mr Ferguson of Cairnbrock, anent the Liquidation of the Debt on Congregational Property, when the Synod resolved itself into a committee of the whole house to consider the subject, and Mr Stevenson took the chair. The Convener, Mr Smith, gave in the Report, the purport of which is as follows:—

"In accordance with instructions, your Committee prepared, and laid before the Trustees, a petition on behalf of the Synod, which was duly responded to by a grant of £500 sterling on the following condition, viz.—that the whole debt upon ecclesiastical property should be cleared off in three years. The plan suggested was, that, in addition to this donation of £500, individuals or congregations should raise £600, in order to form a central fund of £1100, out of which congregations raising their *due* proportion of existing debt within the given time should be aided in clearing off the whole. The plan thus submitted to your Committee was duly laid before congregations, or, at least, sessions, by a printed circular, accompanied with blank schedules to be filled up and duly returned within a given date. Several congregations have failed to make such specific returns as were desired: hence the present Report must be submitted as so far incomplete. But your Committee are happy to state, that from the returns already received, the state of the debt, the donations offered, and congregational engagements to pay within the given time their due proportion, furnish data sufficient to warrant the Synod in accepting the donation offered upon the conditions stated.

"Until the returns are complete, it would be improper to exhibit in a tabular form the local debt of congregations, or their special engagements to raise funds in order to its liquidation. Neither is it thought desirable to publish the names of gentlemen or of congregations who have subscribed to the central fund until all who have promised to do so have had an opportunity of giving the Committee a definite reply; but, in the mean time, it is cheering to mention the fact, that one gentleman has subscribed £100, another £50, &c., while congregations have subscribed from £150 downwards for this object. As soon as the Committee have been able to complete the list of subscriptions, the whole will be laid before the congregations in due form."

After lengthened and deliberate consideration of the above Report, and the data upon which it is founded, it was moved and unanimously agreed to, that the Synod approve the diligence of the Committee, record a cordial vote of thanks to the Convener and the Committee, and re-appoint them to take the necessary steps for completing the arrangements in regard to this important scheme, with the view of handing over the entire matter to a Committee of laymen, afterwards named, who shall in future manage the scheme. The Synod also find, that although all the schedules have not been filled up, nor all the subscriptions obtained for the central fund which may be ultimately realized, they are in a position to give a guarantee to the Ferguson Bequest Trustees that the whole debt shall be paid off in three years, and they resolve accordingly. Wherefore the Synod did, and hereby do, instruct their Clerk to forward said guarantee, and also to convey to the Trustees, their Secretary, and Superintendent, the sincere thanks of the Synod for the donation of £500 granted in answer to their petition. And further, that, in order to carry out vigorously the working of the scheme, the following gentlemen, whose names have been returned from their respective congregations, be constituted the Synod's standing Committee, with power to add to their number, of which Committee Andrew Paterson, Esq., shall be Convener, viz.:—Messrs William Buyers and James Buyers, Aberdeen; Andrew Paterson and John Reid, Ayr; John Knox, Kilwinning; William Howie, John Smith, J. B. Gillies, and Robert Wallace, Glasgow; John Robertson and John M'Clew, Stranraer; Peter M'Intosh and Thomas Gardiner, Coupar-Angus; John Paterson, William M'Gavin, and William Campbell, Auchinleck; D. S. Manson, Peter Campbell, and William Young, Perth; John Coupar, G.

S. Burns, and James Campbell, Thurso; Thomas Brownlee, Daniel Johnston, and Thomas Howie, Pollockshaws; John M'Kay and Allan Stirling, Kirkintilloch; George Jack, Dundee; and Micah Matthew and William Gray, Kirriemuir. The Synod would further suggest that the existing Committee should take immediate steps, by deputation or correspondence, to bring this Liquidation Scheme before such congregations as have not yet made definite returns, so that all may be stimulated to engage heartily in this work, otherwise the guarantee of the Synod may become a burden, should any congregation fail to implement their relative obligations within the given time. The Synod would earnestly solicit the aid of ministers and elders in recommending the scheme, and giving all possible aid to the Committee in working it out. And finally, the Synod would urge upon all the necessity of keeping up the ordinary funds, by church-door collections and other available means, so that the general interests of the body may not be affected, nor the funds of congregations suffer thereby, while this scheme is being prosecuted.

The Synod then resumed, and the Clerk gave in the Report of the Committee, which was adopted.

Proceeded to take up the Report of the Committee on Public Questions, which was read by Dr Blakely. The Report embodied a series of resolutions on practical evils and other important topics. After members had expressed their mind, and suggested several alterations on the resolutions, it was moved and unanimously agreed to, that the Synod approve of the Report, re-appoint the Committee—Dr Blakely, Convener,—and record a cordial vote of thanks to the Committee, especially the Convener, for their diligence in the matter; and that the Synod, while highly approving of the resolutions generally—seeing it had not time to examine them *seriatim*, so as to sanction them—agrees to re-commit them to the Committee for correction, and that they be printed in the Magazine, and also in the newspapers if practicable, and circulated as widely as possible. Petitions to Parliament against the Endowment of Maynooth College in Ireland, and the introduction of Popish School-Books into Schools and other Seminaries supported by Government, were read; and it was agreed that they be signed by the Moderator and Clerk of Synod, and transmitted to the House of Commons for presentation—Mr Dunlop, M.P. for Greenock, to be requested to present them.

Took up the Report of the Committee of Supplies, which was given in by Mr Roger. The Report was approved, and the Synod remitted to the Presbytery of Ayr to arrange how much supply should be annually given by the congregation of Toberdony to the vacancies. Mr Manson was authorized to dispense the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the congregation of Thurso, should it be found suitable, in the peculiar circumstances of the congregation; * and the Committee of Supplies were instructed to grant them supply of sermon. Appointed Mr Manson and Mr Roger a Committee to take charge of the supplies for the current year; and it was agreed that, in order to facilitate the Committee in making out the supplies, and to insure as much as possible regularity in fulfilling the appointments, ministers should intimate to the Clerk, from time to time, on what Sabbaths they cannot give supply. The appointments were ordered to be published, as formerly, in the Magazine. Agreed that collections be made in all the congregations, settled and vacant, throughout the body, for the Home Mission Scheme in July, for the Synod Fund in October, and for the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund in January next, and that these collections, when made, be transmitted to the Synod Treasurer as soon thereafter as possible; and further, that all collections and subscriptions to the Synod's Mutual

* After consultation at a meeting of the Session—the managers being also present—it was judged to be, on the whole, best to postpone the dispensation of the Lord's Supper in this congregation in the meantime.

Assistance Scheme be transmitted to the Treasurer on or before the 10th day of April, when the Treasurer's books for the year are closed.

After conversation, it was agreed that the replies of the Committee of Synod to Mr Brown's answers and defences be circulated, and the Committee were appointed to take charge of this matter. The minutes of Synod were ordered to be printed in full in the Magazine. Appointed next meeting of Synod to be held in Main Street Church, Glasgow, on the Tuesday after the second Sabbath of May, 1859, at 12 o'clock noon; and, after engaging in prayer and praise, the Moderator closed the Synod by pronouncing the Apostolic benediction.

Extracted from the minutes of Synod by

GEORGE ROGER, Synod Clerk.

REPORT OF THE HOME MISSION COMMITTEE,

SUBMITTED TO THE SYNOD OF UNITED ORIGINAL SECEDERS AT ITS ANNUAL MEETING,
HELD IN MAIN STREET CHURCH, GLASGOW, MAY, 1858.

IN submitting this Report, your Committee have to regret, as on former occasions, the very limited materials of a practical kind from which they are compelled to draw up an annual statement. Having at present no regular agency in the home field, your Committee are not furnished with data of a practical kind wherewith to excite interest. On submitting last Annual Report, it was hoped that some ministers and congregations, placed in favourable circumstances for prosecuting this work, would have ere now obtained a regular organization, and have been able even now to furnish interesting details. But from various circumstances connected with the frequent meetings of the Synod, and especially the claims made upon all the brethren for the supply of the vacancies, it was found impracticable to lay any additional labour upon them. Your Committee are led to believe that ere long this special agency may be in operation in various quarters; and this matter they would specially urge upon the attention of the Synod.

There is a second class of cases which seem to your Committee to demand special and immediate consideration, namely—small vacancies where there is a field of missionary labour. In three of these, at least, there is a loud call for missionary work, namely—Arbroath, Balmullo, and Kirkaldy. Having congregations, or portions of congregations, in these localities, we are furnished with a nucleus or central influence from which to direct our agency on the mass of heathenism around. But we have more than this: we have a solemn responsibility, by our local position, devolving upon us. In some of these localities we have places of worship which we can only use at intervals, while there are hundreds around them who are living in practical heathenism. But it may be said we have no ministers to send to these localities. True; but does that circumstance free us from all responsibility? Your Committee respectfully submit their conviction that it does not. You have students in course of preparation for the ministry, and these you ought, under proper regulations

and Presbyterial inspection, to employ. Why should they be employed in teaching or other secular callings for the greater part of the year, while studying divinity, and these localities left without any kind of missionary agency? Your Committee are aware of the strong opposition which has been frequently made to employment of students in such work; but they would humbly submit their conviction that such opposition arises from a misapprehension both of the nature of the work assigned them, and the views of the Reformed and Covenanted Church of Scotland regarding the practice. Not only would the Reformed and Covenanted Church of Scotland have employed those prosecuting their studies for the ministry in the duties of visitation and reading of the Scriptures, but also, at times, in the exercise of their gifts in preaching the gospel. In the Directory for Public Worship, to which we have given our assent, as contained in the Standards of the Church of Scotland, it is said—"Such as intend the ministry may occasionally both read the Word and exercise their gift in preaching in the congregation, if allowed by the Presbytery thereunto" (Con. of Faith, p. 365). Although this practice had fallen into desuetude while the Church had more preachers than her supposed necessities required, and while she felt no interest in any thing beyond the prosperity of her settled congregations, there seems to your Committee no valid reason why the practice here allowed should not be revived when either the circumstances of the Church or the state of the world require such agency. They would moreover venture to express the conviction, that entrants for the ministry are deeply injured by the limited amount of practical preparation furnished by the usual course of secluded study, confined to a few weeks' exercise in systematic theology. The Church requires pastors as well as teachers; and we think that those who have had longest experience in the work of the ministry will be disposed to admit, that dealing with souls in the way of family visitation is not the least difficult or least important part of their work. And yet, in the existing mode of theological training for the ministry, there is no provision made for the exercise or trial of gifts in catechising or family visitation.

Your Committee have dwelt longer on this point than may seem consistent with the character of such a Report; but they have done so from a conviction of its vast importance, and from the desire that something practical may be elicited, by which the Committee may be enabled to commence and to carry forward evangelistic operations.

In addition to this, there is another class of labourers who may be legitimately employed, according to the authority of the Church of Scotland, namely—catechists or Scripture-readers. This agency might be beneficially employed in a variety of circumstances. First, In settled congregations, under the superintendence of the pastor. Second, Among the benighted devotees of Antichrist in Ireland or elsewhere, if such could be obtained to read the Bible in the native tongue; and, third, In India or Africa, where native converts may be obtained to read the book of God to their enslaved and degraded tribes. If it was by the reading of the Bible in the vulgar tongue that Scotland was chiefly prepared to cast off the yoke of Popery at

the Reformation, ought not the same instrumentality to be employed whenever God may grant opportunity, even although the Church may not be able to establish a regularly ordained ministry. Is there not reason to believe that, in the establishment of missionary agency in heathen lands, too little attention has been given to the power of God's own word, as presented in His own book, designed for, and addressed to the whole human family?

But while expressing these convictions regarding a general course of action, your Committee have especially in view the employment of qualified persons to act as catechists or Scripture-readers among the home heathen, under the superintendence of our ministers and Sessions. In order to carry this proposal into operation, two things are requisite—the persons qualified to engage in such work, and the means of their support while thus engaged. As regards the former, your Committee feel convinced that there are many such among us, could they be induced to renounce their secular callings and prospects. And as regards the second, there is also a growing conviction that, were such an agency employed, the funds for their support should not be found wanting. There seems to be a growing conviction on the minds of our people that we are failing in duty as regards missionary work; and we feel convinced that, were the Church herself more engaged in this work, there would be found a much deeper interest in all her ecclesiastical procedure.

Your Committee are rejoiced to find that the Ayr congregation has not abandoned the field, though deprived of their former efficient agent. Their Annual Report has been duly submitted, and presents many interesting and encouraging features. Having been already printed in the Magazine, it is not requisite that it should now be formally presented to the Synod; but, as it contains matters of fact worthy of imitation by other congregations, we beg to lay a few short extracts before the Court.

First, The Ayr congregation have repeatedly advertised for an agent, and are still open to an engagement, should any qualified person present himself for the work.

Second, Voluntary and gratuitous labour is still in progress, as regards the distribution of tracts and the holding of prayer meetings. The report states that about 322 tracts and 50 copies of the *Gospel Trumpet* are weekly circulated in the destitute districts, which are gladly received and read by the majority of those upon whom the distributors call.

In regard to prayer meetings, two are specially mentioned as still in efficient operation,—the former in Garden Street, conducted by Messrs Millar and Jamieson; the latter at New Prestwick, by Mr J. Cairns. The average attendance at the meeting in Garden Street is about 12, and at Prestwick about 16, most of whom are non-attenders on any church. For these efforts the congregation and the Church at large have reason to be thankful. And while your Committee would say that their brethren in Ayr have reason to thank God and take courage, they would at the same time express the earnest hope and desire that God, in His gracious providence, may soon send them a

regular agent, and that the Synod shall be ready to aid them in their efforts to raise such an annual salary as may be in accordance with such responsibility,—it being just and necessary that those who devote themselves to such important work should be rewarded according to their labours.

Your Committee feel encouraged to press the claims of the home heathen upon the attention of the Synod, in consequence of the prospect of the extinction within a given time of the existing debt upon church property. The sum annually paid in the shape of interest would aid materially in supporting catechists at home or abroad. It is hoped that the removal of debt on ecclesiastical property will be succeeded by an amount of zeal in missionary work which has never been hitherto attained in our congregations. Nor can we refrain from expressing the conviction, that the reflex influence of being thus engaged would tell in a degree beyond our most enlarged conceptions upon the spirituality and temporal prosperity of our congregations. The windows of heaven are still under the keeping of Zion's Lord and King. His promise is immutable. May we not, therefore, legitimately infer, that when His people bring *all* their offerings into His house, and devote their energies in behalf of His cause, that He will open the windows of heaven, and pour forth such a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it?

But your Committee feel that they would fail in duty did they not lay before you, in such a Report as this, the claims of the perishing heathen on the one hand, and the authority of God in this matter upon the other. It is a painful fact that there are hundreds—yea, in cases not a few, thousands of souls around our churches perishing for lack of spiritual knowledge. Some of these have lapsed from a higher position in the scale of society, having despised the means of grace enjoyed in youth; but the majority of such have been brought up in absolute moral darkness, by whom it may be literally said—no man careth for our souls. If Christian parents find it so difficult, with all their advantages, to commend Bible religion to the souls of their children, what must be the development of human depravity where there have been no such parents, and where generation after generation has grown up under the upas-tree of ignorance and vice? Are not such to all intents and purposes heathen, though born in a Christian land? They are perishing as really, and with greater guilt, than those in distant lands, upon whom the light of the gospel has never shone. Yes, but they are perishing under our eye—around the very doors of our churches,—and that while we stretch not forth a hand to save them. Such apathy to save fellow-men from temporal death would be deemed a disgrace to humanity, but what must it be in the eye of a gracious God, who has said of the gospel, “freely ye have received, freely give!” What must it be in the eye of that self-sacrificing Redeemer, who laid down his life that sinners might be saved! Will not their blood be required of us if we utterly fail in making scriptural efforts for their salvation?

Besides, the fact must not be concealed that there are other and potent agents in the field. Infidelity is prosecuting its hardening

process. Immorality is extending its ramifications, and Popery is seizing its deluded victims among young and old. That ignorance, which is the great barrier to missionary progress in the eye of the Church of Christ, is the most essential element for the development of these soul-destroying social evils. Are we to abandon the field, and leave these agencies to work at will? If so, the consequences will be most disastrous to the Church and to the land, while the guilt of being unfaithful to their trust will assuredly rest upon professing Christians and apathetic Churches. Who can tell what evil consequences we might prevent by using the means in our power? And who can tell what retribution awaits us, as a people living secure, should we persevere in disregarding the claims of the perishing heathen around us? With bleeding, distracted India still pressed upon our attention, let us hear the voice of solemn warning—let us remember that surely there is a God that judgeth in the earth. Should Popery once more gain the ascendancy through the apathy of professing Christians, the darkest horrors of Indian rapine and murder will be assuredly cast into the shade by her who is already drunk with the blood of the saints.

But leaving all contingencies out of view, and holding in abeyance all arguments deducible from local circumstances or moral conditions, the question simply is, What doth the God of Providence and grace require of us in regard to the home heathen? This is a question which we cannot put from us. It comes from Him whose authority we cannot gainsay nor resist but at our peril. Let us, as a Church-Court of Christ, calmly ponder its import. Let each one earnestly inquire, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Though we may not be in possession of the ten talents, nor in a position to exercise them—though we may not be entrusted with the five talents, nor so situated as to trade with them,—surely we will not accuse our generous Master of leaving us destitute of any; and though it should be but the one talent, surely none will say, Let us bury it in the earth, and fold our hands against the day of our Lord's coming!

Without entering further into matters of detail, or suggesting such practical plans as may suggest themselves to the minds of all, your Committee desire to leave the subject, in all its bearings, in the hands of the Court for mature deliberation, in order to definite results,—praying that the King and Head of the Church may direct the Synod to such decisions as may be glorifying to His name, and rendered instrumental in the salvation of souls.

Signed, in behalf of the Committee, by

JOHN BLAKELY, *Convener.*

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY SYNOD TO PREPARE A DRAFT OF A SCHEME TO REGULATE THE SUPPLY OF THE VACANCIES IN EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES.

AFTER full and mature deliberation, your Committee feel assured that there is absolute necessity for material changes in the mode of regulating the supply of the vacancies, especially when that supply falls upon the settled ministers. But considering the circumstances in which we are at present placed, and the fact that there is an existing Committee engaged in preparing a code of Church laws, which ought necessarily to embrace this matter, and considering, further, that the right regulation of supply would involve an inquiry into the circumstances of each congregation which the Committee is not warranted to make, it is deemed prudent for the present to confine their scheme to a simple draft of appointments for the ensuing year.

In doing so, however, your Committee earnestly request all the members of Court to give this matter that deliberate consideration which its vast importance demands. The provision of supply is a matter regarding which each minister and congregation ought to feel special responsibility. The Committee of Supplies have the responsibility of arranging according to their best judgment; but the giving of supply is the duty of all united. In reviewing the past, your Committee feel constrained to say that this aspect of the subject must have been overlooked by many congregations, and not a few ministers, otherwise the labours of the Committee of Supplies would have been much lighter; a nearer approach to equality of service would have been attained, and fewer disappointments would have been experienced by vacant congregations; while, at the same time, the burden laid upon other settled charges would have been materially lightened.

While presenting the matter of supply in this general aspect, your Committee cannot overlook the fact, that the pecuniary and spiritual interests of the whole body, as such, clearly indicate that proportional supply is absolutely necessary, as a principle, to be kept in view in any general legislation upon this matter; but, in the meantime, they would earnestly recommend ministers and Sessions to consider the general interests of the body, while responding to the claims made upon them for occasional supply. Your Committee would also beg those congregations settled since the disruption of the Synod, seriously to consider the sacrifices made by ministers and congregations previously settled, in order to keep up the banner of a Judicial Testimony for Christ's Crown and Covenant among them. Many of these congregations have not yet recovered from the effects of frequent vacancies during that period, and have therefore a special claim upon indulgence in regard to supply, or, at least, from that unequal sacrifice which has fallen to their lot. The number of settlements obtained ought in reality to make the supply for remaining vacancies easier obtained, could all parties be brought to see local and personal responsibility in respect to the whole. The reluctance of a few ministers or congregations to grant occasional supply has been the pri-

mary source of the whole difficulty in keeping up our former and existing vacancies. Until unity of aim and interest be obtained on this point, there is reason to fear that no scheme of legislation will be efficient, and no existing arrangement fully carried out.

But seeing that existing vacancies are an integral part of the whole Church, and that their claim for the dispensation of ordinances, according to circumstances, is the same as that of settled congregations, your Committee would allude briefly to the whole subject, as it presents itself to their minds, before presenting a tabular statement of the proposed supply for the ensuing year.

The existing vacancies are six in number, namely, Arbroath, Balmullo, Clola, Edinburgh, Kirkaldy, and Thurso. These vacancies present a variety of circumstances and prospects which are generally known to the members of Court, and need not be presented here in detail. Some of them present admirable fields for home missionary operations; but, in the absence of such labourers, all require to be supplied with ordinances as their circumstances require, and as the Synod may be able to afford their dispensation. These ordinances ought to embrace the preaching of the gospel, the dispensation of the seals of the Covenant, and pastoral superintendence, by annual family visitation and catechising. It is known to all the members of Court that for these six vacancies there are at present no stated ordinances, except such as are furnished by the appointment of settled ministers; and it is also known that, for want of any specific arrangement, and in consequence of the continual pressure of labour, there has been no provision hitherto made for the pastoral inspection of vacant congregations. Indeed it has been found that the dispensation of the gospel and of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, taken in connection with local duties and frequent journeys, has already been too much for the health of some of those more frequently engaged. But still your Committee are of opinion, that what duty requires to these vacancies might be fully met by judicious arrangements on the part of the Synod; while it is taken for granted, on the other hand, that these vacancies will also take an interest in all that pertains to the general good of the body.

Your Committee cannot pass over the fact, that there is not a single preacher upon the roll of the Synod, without calling upon all seriously to consider the matter in the light of Christ's claim upon the services of His professed followers. While calling attention to the want of probationers, your Committee would not overlook the goodness of God in giving so many labourers, and so many acceptable settlements, since the disruption of the Synod. For those ministers given to the Church in the day of trial they would desire ever to cherish the deepest gratitude. Neither would they overlook the fact that there are several students in various stages of preparation for the gospel ministry. But, notwithstanding their sense of the Divine goodness, they would earnestly ask, and entreat professing Christians to ask, how it is that so few of our Christian youth devote themselves to the special service of Christ in the gospel ministry? How is it that in the mercantile and legal professions there are more than enough to fill

all their offices—that even in the Army and Navy there are recruits in abundance to meet the most extensive demands? while in the Church of Christ, and beneath the banner of the Captain of salvation, there cannot be found officers to rally and lead on the broken and scattered ranks of His time-honoured army! How painful is the thought that the prayer of the opening century is thus practically pressed on our attention in the latter half—the privileged half of the nineteenth century of the Christian era! “Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into the harvest.” The God of providence and grace is opening up the world for the extension of His Church; and yet she is little more than stationary—yea even, in cases not a few, retreating within her ancient lines of defence—because of the lack of “good soldiers of Christ,” such as Paul described in writing to Timothy. Are we therefore to infer that the King and Head in Zion has been unfaithful to His promise, or that He has refused to hear the cry of His believing followers? It cannot be. But the Church has been unfaithful to Him. The prayer, if uttered at all, has not been followed by the discharge of duty. Christian parents have not felt as they ought the claims of Christ upon their offspring. They have not been sufficiently guided by a regard to the Divine glory in the selection of callings for their children. The office of the gospel ministry has not been supported nor honoured according to its high and holy position—the acquisition of a fortune has been deemed more important than the salvation of souls—the applause of the world more desirable than the ministerial crown—the comfort of families has been set before the good of the Church—the Lord’s treasury has been left empty or scantily supplied, while worldly treasures have yielded a rich reward—earthly professions have been liberally supported, while gospel ministers have been subjected to suffering and penury,—hence the inadequate supply of ministers to meet the increasing wants of the Church. Let parents, let the Christian youth of the Church, ponder well the claims of Zion’s King, so that the petition for an increase of labourers may not be a solemn mockery, and that there may be found mothers, like Hannah, lending their sons for life unto the Lord, and converted youths, like Timothy, girding on their armour as good soldiers of Christ. Let Christians and Churches study the claims of Christ, for the support of His ministering servants, so that the cry of the gospel reapers may not come into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and provoke Him to remove the candlestick out of its place.

While thus incidentally looking at the past, and anticipating the future, your Committee feel that they have a special duty to discharge for the present, namely, the provision of supply for the vacancies specified, by a scheme of appointments extending over the ensuing year.

It is believed that there must be a reduction, to some extent, of the supply granted last year to the whole, in order to avoid infringing on the financial resources of several congregations. Your Committee would therefore recommend that each congregation should give three days’ supply to the vacancies, except in such cases as have failed to give the average supply during the last year. They would also recom-

mend that where ministers find that they can leave a day occasionally, in consequence of neighbouring sacraments, that such should be freely given, either to increase the amount of supply, or to lessen the frequency of vacancies in settled congregations. Taking into account the amount of pastoral labour, which may be increased or diminished by members and other local circumstances, it is recommended that such as have widely scattered congregations, requiring much time for visitation and catechising, should be released of this duty in the vacancies, leaving it to those who have more leisure to overtake that work.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC QUESTIONS,

SUBMITTED TO THE SYNOD OF UNITED ORIGINAL SECEDERS AT THEIR ANNUAL MEETING, HELD IN GLASGOW, MAY, 1858.

YOUR Committee deeply regret that their time has been so fully occupied with other matters connected with the public business of the Church, that they have not been able to devote that attention to the consideration of public questions which their paramount importance demands. Besides, their distance from each other is such as to preclude the possibility of frequent meetings for mutual counsel. Their Annual Report must consequently be submitted with all the disadvantages of being prepared and adopted amidst the pressure of Synodical business. This apology is not designed as an excuse for any apparent neglect on the part of the Committee, but in order to show their deep conviction of the importance of this part of judicial proceedings; this being the only method by which the Synod, as such, can lift their voice annually against those public evils, which ought specially to be made at all seasonable times the subject of the Church's judicial testimony.

Your Committee would humbly suggest, that hereafter one entire sederunt should be spent in calm deliberation upon the signs of the times, so that the supreme Court may seasonably issue faithful warnings regarding impending dangers, and at the same time call attention to such tokens for good as may encourage the hearts of God's people, and elicit gratitude and praise to His holy name.

Your Committee would at present submit the following double series of resolutions, and also recommend that petitions should be presented to the House of Commons anent the Maynooth Endowment, the sanction of Popish School Books by the Privy Council, the admission of the Jews to Parliament, and the attempt being made to obtain a repeal of the Forbes Mackenzie Liquor Traffic Act.

RESOLUTIONS AGAINST PUBLIC EVILS.

I. That this Synod, while constrained by a conviction of duty to maintain, as heretofore, their judicial testimony for the whole principles of the Covenanted Reformation, and against defections therefrom by both Church and State, feel at the same time specially called, as

witnesses for the cause of Christ in these lands, to mark the signs of the times, to apply their testimony to existing evils, and to lift the voice of warning regarding impending dangers, so that all may be guided by a certain sound, in reference to present duty, in connection with passing events. This course seems the more imperative in consequence of the present transition state of society, ecclesiastical and civil, and the fact that public opinion is assuming an arrogant supremacy directly subversive of the authority of God.

II. That this Synod views with alarm the efforts being made by Popery for the restoration of Papal supremacy in all Protestant lands. More especially would they notice the influence which it wields over the nations and sovereigns of Europe, through Jesuitical intrigue and priestly domination—the indication of a wide-spread conspiracy against the exercise of civil and religious liberty—the connection of Britain with the abettors of antichrist—the introduction to places of power and trust of those who are essentially and permanently the subjects of the Pope—the yielding of Protestant statesmen to Popish influence—the indifference of all classes to impending danger—the lapsing of Protestants to the communion of Rome, and the active proselytism of a Popish agency throughout Great Britain and all her dependencies.

III. That this Synod is still more alarmed by the rising tide of ritualism which is at present sweeping over Protestant lands, affecting less or more all churches, and leavening all Christian communities. More especially would they testify against the revival of that Laudean Prelacy, under which, in former times, so many martyrs were sacrificed to the demon of arbitrary power, which is now so rapidly spreading under the type of Puseyism, and which is sapping the foundations of the Episcopal Church throughout these kingdoms. Neither are they less alarmed by the ritualising elements and influences recently introduced to Presbyterian Churches in this and other lands; such as the return to mediæval architecture—the re-introduction of Popish symbols, attitudes, and musical instruments to places of public worship—the tendency of many wearing the Protestant name to return to a sensuous and ritual devotion—the perversion of art, by the restoration of Popish pictures, images, and symbols—the moulding of public taste by their exhibition in galleries and museums—their introduction to books, churches, cemeteries, and places of public education,—together with that apathy on the part of Protestants, which clearly indicates that the former wholesome dread of Popery has well nigh vanished from the Protestant community.

IV. This Synod feels constrained to testify anew against the encroachments being made upon our Protestant constitution, under the false and fallacious plea of equality of rights among all who constitute the British public. More especially would they notice the backsliding of the nation from its covenant engagements to the Moral Governor—the emancipation and endowment acts, by which Papists are admitted to places of public trust, and their priesthood trained at the public expense—the re-introduction and endowment of priests in the Army and Navy—the sanction of school books by the Privy Council in which the history of Protestantism is perverted—the doctrines of

grace corrupted, and the object and forms of worship supplanted by idolatry; and the attempts being made to introduce the Jews to Parliament, at the expense of rejecting the term Christian from their official oaths. In reviewing the legislation of the last thirty years, in connection with present measures and prospective movements, genuine Protestants may well stand aghast, and ask, What remaining principle shall be held as sacred or fundamental before this latitudinarian and demoralising policy?

V. This Synod, while deeply sympathising with every legitimate and scriptural means being employed for the education of the young, feel constrained emphatically to testify against every system of education which excludes the elements of true religion and morality, as taught in the book of God. More especially would they testify against the national system of education in Ireland, by which there is provision made for the exclusion of the Bible on the one hand, and the teaching of Popery on the other—against the government education in India, which ignores Christianity in deference to Brahmanism; and also against that vitiated public opinion in Scotland, by which countenance is given to the national support of Popish schools, and which has frustrated attempts at legislation, by which provision might be made for the godly upbringing of the young in our public schools.

VI. That this Synod, while rejoicing in the general diffusion of a taste for literature, and while heartily sympathising with all the legitimate means being employed for its guidance and advancement, cannot fail to express their deep apprehension of the danger to which the rising generation is being exposed by the extensive circulation of a light and polluting literature. More especially would they point out the danger of reading the current novels—light periodicals—corrupting journals—heterodox tracts—sceptical newspapers and reviews, together with romances and plays,—which unfit the mind for serious thought—deprave the passions—undermine social morality—and subvert the foundations of domestic comfort.

VII. That this Synod, while cordially approving of the limitation of the hours of labour, and rejoicing in the facilities afforded for the healthful recreation of all classes, feel at the same time constrained to warn the young of the temptations to which they are exposed by joining in pleasure excursions—resorting to fashionable, rural, or sea-side localities to spend the Sabbath; nor would they fail to warn all of the dangers of the tavern, the theatre, the ball-room, and the Saturday night concert, by which the physical system is impaired, and the mind unfitted for the sacred duties and high privileges of the Sabbath.

VIII. That this Synod, while deeply sympathising with those Europeans and others who have been sufferers in consequence of the recent Indian revolt, feel constrained to express the conviction, that this rebellion ought to be viewed as at once a fruit and punishment of our ungodly policy towards that vast empire. More especially would they confess with shame the wrongs perpetrated during the subjugation of many portions of India to the British crown—the discouragement given by those in power to gospel missionaries—the

exclusion of the Bible and Christian education from government schools—the pecuniary support and countenance given to idolatry,—and, in fine, the retention of India for the aggrandizement of man, without regard to the glory of God or the moral elevation of its inhabitants. For these and other national sins in relation to India, “a tumult has arisen among the people;” for these things “our fortresses are spoiled, and the mother has been dashed in pieces upon her children.”

IX. That this Synod, while deeply sympathising with those suffering *innocently*, in consequence of the recent commercial crisis, cannot but express their abhorrence of the lax state of commercial morality, and those systematic frauds which have spread desolation among the various classes of the community. More especially would they direct their testimony against false competition—reckless speculation—fictitious bills of accommodation—fraudulent partnerships—deceitful settlements with creditors—dishonest bankruptcies—hollow advertising—misrepresentation of goods—extravagant modes of life—pursuit of unlawful pleasures—disregard of obligations to man, together with the systematic robbery of God in withholding what is due to His Church and to humanity. For these things, the wrath of God has been revealed against us in the way of smiting our commercial prosperity, in order that we may be taught by His judgments what we have failed to learn by the teachings of His word, viz., that “righteousness exalteth a nation, while sin is a reproach to any people.”

X. That this Synod, while claiming for all the invaluable right of personal liberty to serve God on the holy Sabbath, feel constrained to testify against, and condemn the claims avowed by many to spend it as they list. More especially would they testify against the running of railway trains—the plying of steamboats and public conveyances—the carrying and delivery of mails—the making of merchandise—the opening of public gardens, galleries, and museums—excursions for pleasure—dinner and evening parties—reading of newspapers and secular journals—walking for pleasure—neglect of divine ordinances—and carnal conversation; by all of which practices the law of God is violated—the rights of man invaded—the comfort of families destroyed—the souls of so many of the young ruined—and all classes of the community tempted to neglect the great salvation.

XI. That this Synod, while deeply sympathising with every scriptural means being employed for the suppression of intemperance, and while deeply deploring the appalling extent of drunkenness, with attendant evils, which still characterize the land, would more especially lift their voice against all Sabbath traffic in spirituous liquors, and also in favour of the Forbes Mackenzie Act, restricting the sale of the same to week-days, and to a limited time. Being assured that the said act has been the means of effecting much good to the community at large, and also of removing temptations out of the way of publicans to violate the Sabbath by traffic, and oppress their children and dependents by labour; they would therefore deprecate all attempts being made to obtain a repeal of said Act, as at once dishonouring to God, ruinous to the families of publicans and their Sabbath supporters,

while at the same time destructive of the public peace of the Christian community, and the local quietude of families residing in their neighbourhood.

XII. That this Synod, while holding in the fullest sense the right of private judgment, and the duty of all to be ready to give an intelligent reason of the hope that is in them, feel at the same time constrained to bear emphatic testimony against the rising spirit of intellectual pride and dogmatic arrogance which is ever ready to lay the dictates of Divine authority at the feet of human reason. More especially would they bear witness against that vain, speculative spirit of inquiry which substitutes human fancies for Divine realities—which sets up and appeals to human authority in opposition to the revealed will of God—which prefers some novelty in doctrine or innovation in worship to the clearly ascertained truth of God and the divinely appointed institutions of His grace—which judges what ought to have been revealed rather than yields obedience to what God has propounded—which, in fact, is attempting to overturn the authority of Zion's Lord and King, in order to the setting up of the idol of human reason, and which renders that homage to the intellect of man which is due to the universal Creator and Governor.

While your Committee would thus submit for the consideration of the Synod a summary of practical evils, and urge upon the Church the necessity of bearing witness against them, they feel that they would fail in duty did they not also mark and record such tokens for good as the providence and grace of God have furnished, and which are calculated to encourage the hearts and excite the gratitude of all those who are marking the signs of the times, and desirous to ascertain the path of duty.

I. That this Synod, without expressing any judgment upon the recent awakenings in America, or approving of all that is recorded of the mode of conducting revival meetings for prayer, cannot refrain from expressing gratitude to God for apparent signs of returning vitality, and more especially for the fact that so many thousands of their fellow-men are awakened to see their need of salvation—that so many are constrained to resort to those places where prayer is wont to be made—that so many of the ungodly and openly profane are manifesting reformation of life—that so many of the former haunts of Satan have been turned into places for prayer—that so many of the youth of the land are consecrating themselves to the service of God—that so many, formerly indifferent, are earnestly waiting upon the means of grace, and that such extensive means are being employed to bring all into contact with the preaching of the gospel.

II. This Synod feels warranted and constrained to urge upon all the necessity of employing that Christian influence wherewith they are entrusted to bring others to the means of grace. More especially would they urge gospel hearers to say "Come" to those without the Church, and to organize congregational and local prayer meetings, by which all may be excited and stimulated in the path of duty. And, seeing that every genuine revival of religion in the soul or in the community has been, and must be, accompanied with fervent prayer, it becomes

every lover of Zion to pray that God would extend and carry forward His work in America, and that He would graciously pour out the influences of the Spirit upon the British Churches, and throughout the world.

III. That this Synod, while deeply sympathising with all the scriptural efforts being made at home and abroad for the evangelization of the heathen world, and while regretting their inability to take their place in the foreign field, feel more especially called upon to mark, with gratitude, the Divine preservation of the missionaries and converts generally during the Indian revolt—the special grace given to some who were slain of bearing testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus—the vindication of the missionary enterprise from the accusations of its foes, and the interest which has been awakened regarding the evangelization of India in the American and European Churches; nor would they overlook the fact that, while war has directed the mind of Christendom to India as a ripe field for missionary enterprise, the God of peace has been effecting the same object in reference to Africa, through the self-sacrificing labours of Drs Livingstone and Barth, so that both these mighty regions, with their hundreds of millions of inhabitants, are being placed within the reach of evangelistic efforts.

IV. That this Synod, while constrained to mourn over the appalling fact that thousands, young and old, are living in this Christian land without God, and without even the forms of religion, cannot but rejoice that their moral degradation is at length attracting the attention of the Churches, and that various means are being employed for their physical, mental, and spiritual elevation. More especially would they enumerate scriptural education, home missionary effort, tract distribution, and reformatory institutions. They would, at the same time, express the conviction that, while these may materially aid in arresting the tide of immorality, none of them, nor all combined, can effect the reformation of the community, without the recognition and diligent discharge of all relative duties by ministers and magistrates, parents and children, masters and servants.

V. That this Synod, while sympathising with all the genuine followers of the Lord Jesus Christ in their scriptural efforts to advance His kingdom and glory, would more especially, as covenanted witnesses for the cause of Zion's King, express their gratitude to find that in Ireland and in America many have renewed, and others are preparing for a renewal of the Covenants—while within the Free Church of Scotland an association has been organized for the express and avowed purpose of reviving, within that Church, and throughout the land, the principles of the Covenanted Reformation.

VI. That this Synod, while sharing in those trials which are common to the Church of Christ, and while called to encounter those difficulties which are inseparable from her witnessing position, feel constrained to bless God that they have been preserved from those false doctrines which are distracting so many sections of the Church, and from those innovations in worship which, if persisted in, must rend many ecclesiastical denominations; nor would they overlook the fact that there is, as heretofore, perfect unanimity in regard to the

doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Reformed and Covenanted Church of Scotland, accompanied by an increasing spirit of liberality on the part of the people, such as has not been hitherto attained in the history of many congregations.

JOHN BLAKELY, *Convener.*

GENERAL RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

THE space occupied by the Minutes of Synod has prevented the variety in this number which we know is so desirable, and which every effort will be made to supply in future, when a new volume commences. There is only room at present for a fragmentary outline of several interesting things which have been taking place.

There is an important union just consummated between the Associate Synod of North America and the Associate Reformed Synod, the particulars of which we expect to be able to give in our next. The United Synod consists of about five hundred ministers. Seven ministers of the Associate Synod have protested against the union, as too lax, and about the same number of ministers of the Associate Reformed, as too strict; but we do not know the precise grounds on which the protests are founded. There is one protest because the union was not consummated by covenanting, in which three parties concur, apart from the two referred to.

Measures for union are also in progress between the Presbyterian Churches in Canada, now connected with the Free Church of Scotland, and the United Presbyterian Church respectively; and a union has been formed among the Presbyterian Churches of Australia, formerly more or less closely related to the Free and Established Churches of Scotland, into the particulars of which there is no space left to enter. For the same reason, a review of Courts of the Presbyterian Churches in north and south Britain, in relation to the organ and other questions, has to be postponed.

In France there is cause to lament that the remaining shreds of liberty enjoyed by Protestants are being more and more restricted by the rising influence of Popish and political tyranny; and the same persecuting spirit manifests itself in the different continental kingdoms in which there is Popish ascendancy. Turkey is still in a very unsatisfactory state. The expectations formed in the minds of the lovers of true liberty from the late imperial edict are not realized, partly through the feeble influence of the central government at Constantinople in the provinces, in which every pacha is a petty tyrant, and partly through the lukewarmness of the British Government in matters in which Protestant principle is concerned.

At home, a bill is passing through the Commons House of Parliament, transferring the government of India from the Company to the Crown. But alas! there is no indication that vigorous measures, or indeed any measures, are in contemplation for the reform of the administration of that extended empire, either in its civil or religious aspects.

SYNOD FUND.

1857.

April 21. To Balance of last Account,.....	£312 15 0	
Received after Accounts were closed—		
Collection from Colmonell,.....	£2 12 0	
Donation from Mr Morrison,.....	2 0 0	

1858.

April 21. Collections—Aberdeen,.....	£2 10 0	4 12 0
Arbroath,.....	2 0 0	
Achinleck,.....	1 16 3	
Ayr,.....	3 16 0	
Balmullo,.....	0 11 6	
* Birseay,.....	
Carlisle,.....	4 0 0	
Clola,.....	1 0 0	
Colmonell,.....	2 16 0	
Coupar-Angus,.....	1 2 6	
Dundee,.....	2 2 0	
Edinburgh, Infirmary St.,.....	6 10 6	
Glasgow,.....	4 2 0	
Kirriemuir,.....	2 0 0	
Kirkcaldy,.....	1 12 0	
Kirkintilloch,.....	2 0 0	
* Kilmarnock,.....	
* Kilwinning,.....	
Midholm,.....	6 0 0	
Perth,.....	2 4 0	
* Pollockhawa,.....	
Shottaburn,.....	3 7 6	
Stranraer,.....	5 0 0	
* Toberdony,.....	
* Thurso,.....	
Synod in May,.....	0 14 0	
Do. in August,.....	0 6 9	
	55 11 0	

Donations—Mr Moonlight,.....	£2 0 0
A Lady, Dundee,.....	1 0 0
A Friend, Edinburgh,.....	0 10 0
Miss Allan, Clola,.....	0 10 0
	4 0 0
	7 7 5

Interest on Bank Account,.....

£384 5 5

1858.

April 21. By Travelling Expenses of Ministers in supplying vacant congregations,.....	£25 12 0
Donations—Rev. James Anderson,.....	10 0 0
Late Rev. J. Aitken,.....	10 0 0
Kilmarnock Congregation,.....	50 0 0
Arbroath Congregation,.....	15 0 0
Salary to Professor Murray,.....	20 0 0
Do. to Synod Clerk,.....	10 0 0
Paid Synod Officers—four meetings,.....	4 4 0
Do. Synodical Expenses, do.,.....	3 11 10
Do. Stamps, &c. &c., to Treasurer,.....	0 10 0

Balance to new Account,.....
£148 17 10
235 7 7

£384 5 5

MUTUAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME.

1857.				1858.			
April 21. To Balance of last Account,.....				May 21. By Auchinleck,.....			
Received after Accounts were closed—				Carlisle,.....			
Donation from J. McClew, Esq., Port				Coupar-Angus,.....			
Patrick,.....				Colmonell,.....			
Donation from J. Hislop, Esq., Beith, 0 5 0				Birsay,.....			
Donations—Aberdeen,.....				Ballylntagh,.....			
Auchinleck,.....				Dundee,.....			
Ayr,.....				Kilmarnock,.....			
* Ballylntagh,.....				Kirkmuir,.....			
* Birsay,.....				Perth,.....			
* Carlisle,.....							
* Colmonell,.....							
* Coupar-Angus,.....							
* Dundee,.....							
Edinburgh,.....							
Glasgow,.....							
* Kilmarnock,.....							
* Kilwinning,.....							
Kirkcubbin,.....							
Kirkmuir,.....							
Midholm,.....							
Perth,.....							
* Pollockshaws,.....							
* Shottaburn,.....							
Stranraer,.....							
* Thurso,.....							
* Toberdony,.....							
Donations—A Friend, Edinburgh,.....				139 13 4			
Do., Midholm,.....				0 10 0			
Do., Liverpool,.....				1 0 0			
Per Rev. George Roger,...				1 0 0			
Interest on Bank Account,.....				3 10 0			
				1 1 9			
				£167 17 7			

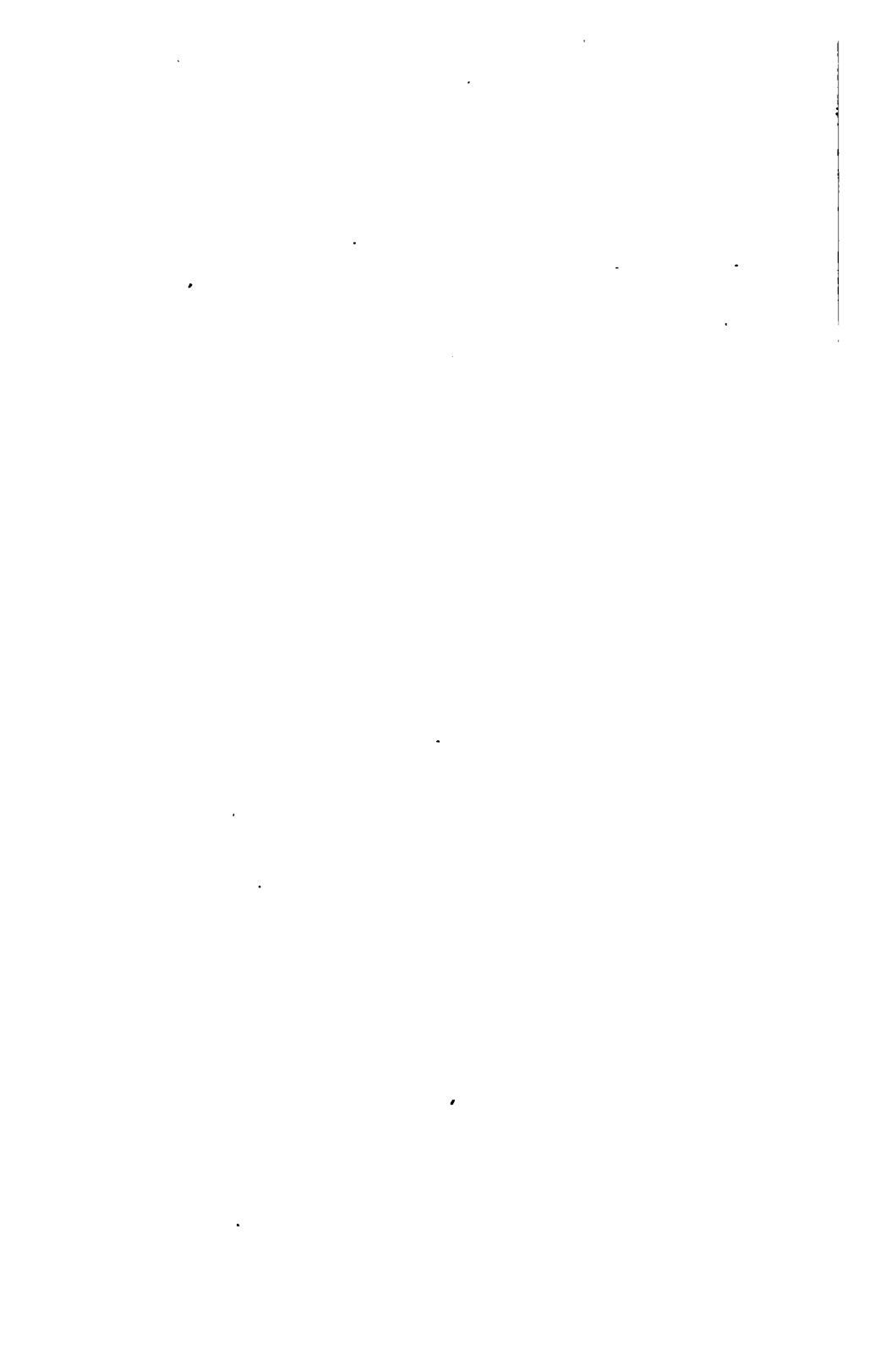
FUND FOR STUDENTS.	
April 21, 1857.	April 21, 1858.
To Balance of last Account, £44 14 3	By Payments to Students, £28 0 0
Sums received after Accounts were closed—	Balance to new Account, 38 14 6
Rev. J. McKay, £2 0 0	
Mr Morrison America, 2 0 0	
Mr Smith, Cantyre, 1 0 0	
Mr Lindsay, Edinburgh, 1 0 0	
An Elder, Perth, 1 0 0	
A Friend, Main Street, 0 2 6	
April 21, 1858.	
Mr Moonlight, Arbroath, ... 5 0 0	
Clola Congregation, 1 0 0	
G., 1 0 0	
A Student, per Prof. Murray, 1 0 0	
Mrs Brown, do., 0 5 0	
A Friend, per Rev. W. Robertson, Dundee, 2 0 0	
A Friend, per Rev. T. Manson, Do. do., 1 0 0	
A Widow, do., 1 0 0	
Interest on Bank Account, 1 12 9	
£66 14 6	£66 14 6

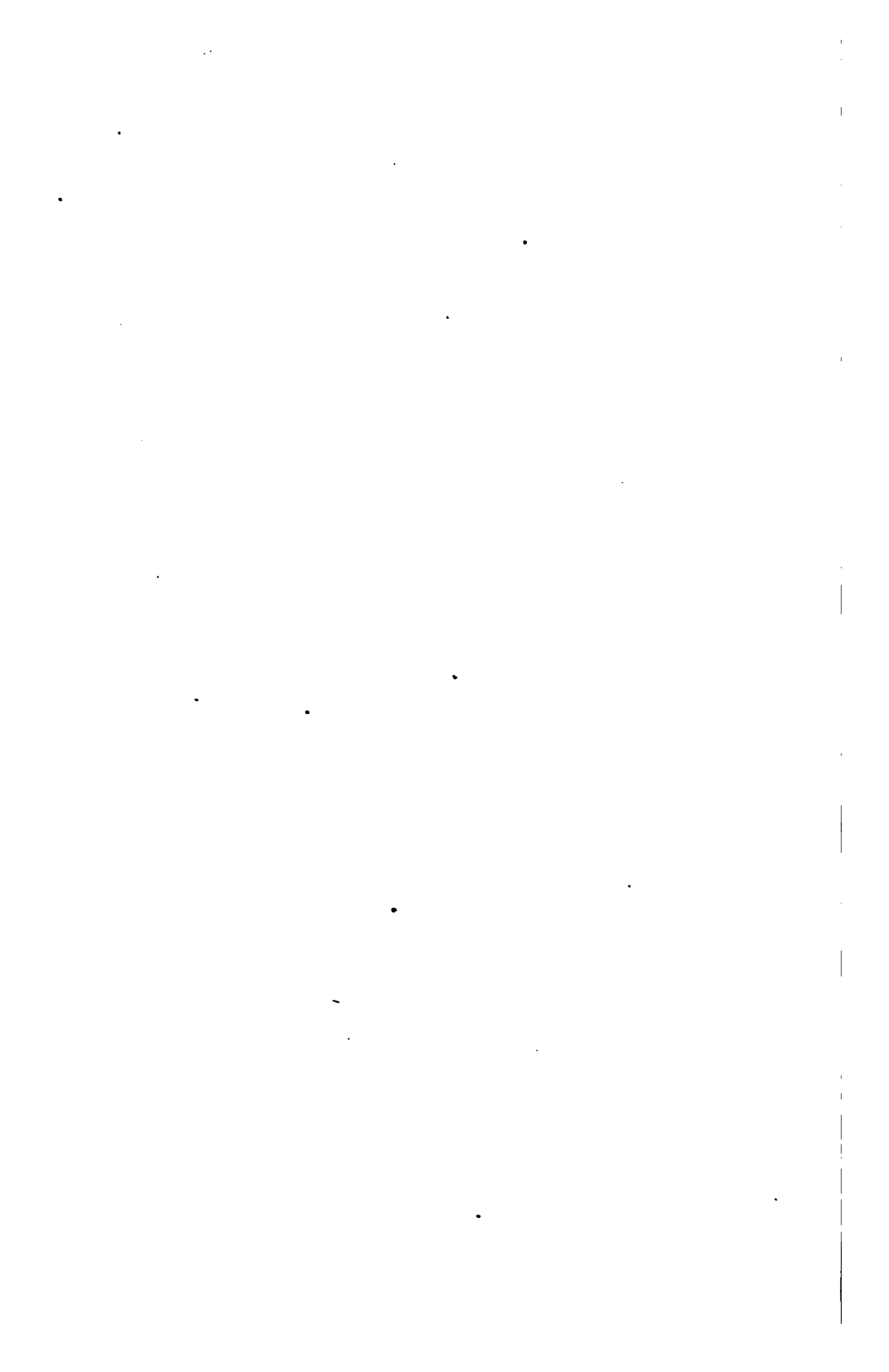
MISSION FUND.

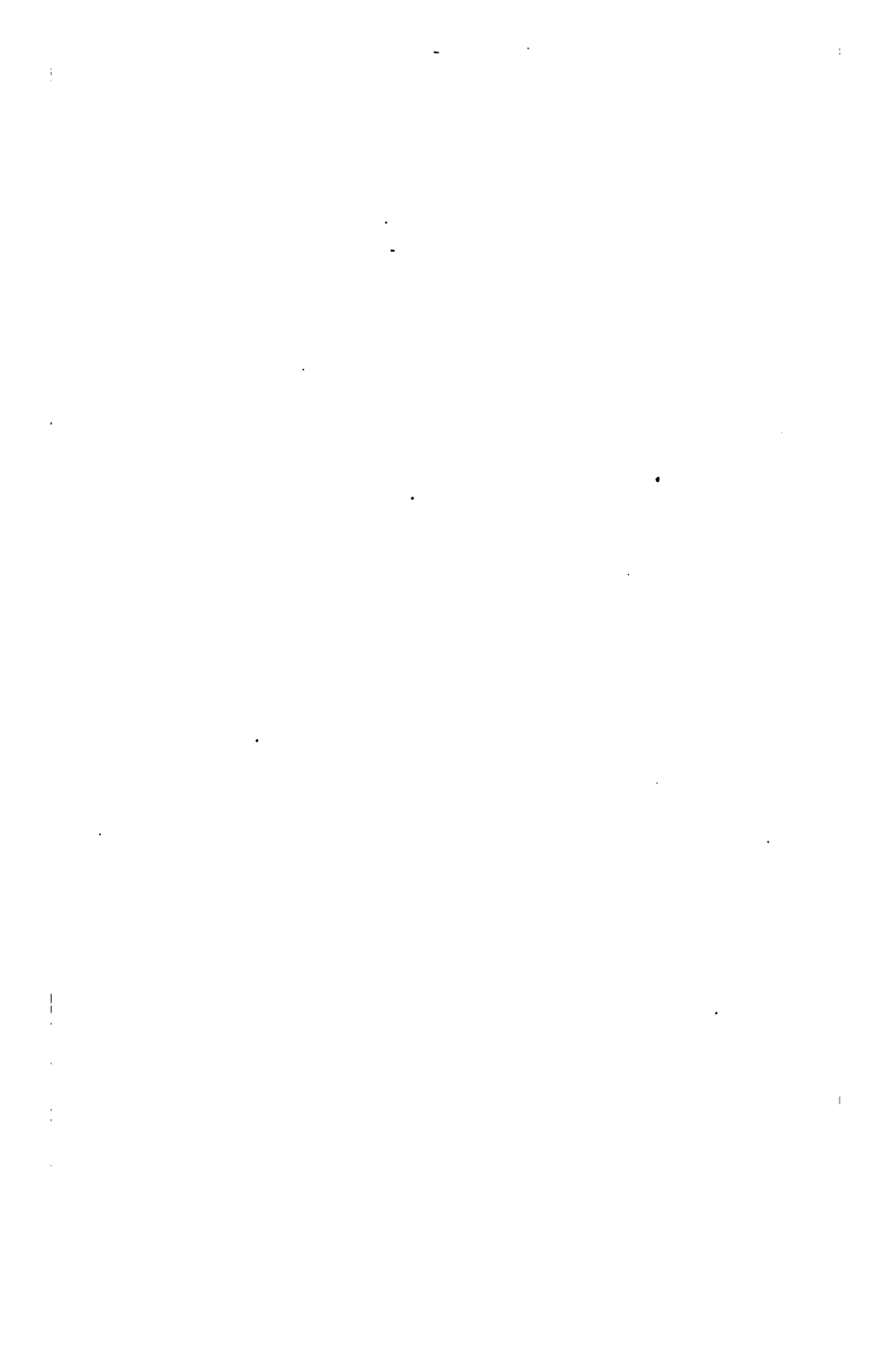
April 21, 1857. To Balance of last Account, £134 10 5	April 21, 1858. By Balance to new Account, £139 3 9
April 21, 1858. To Interest, 4 13 4	
£139 3 9	£139 3 9

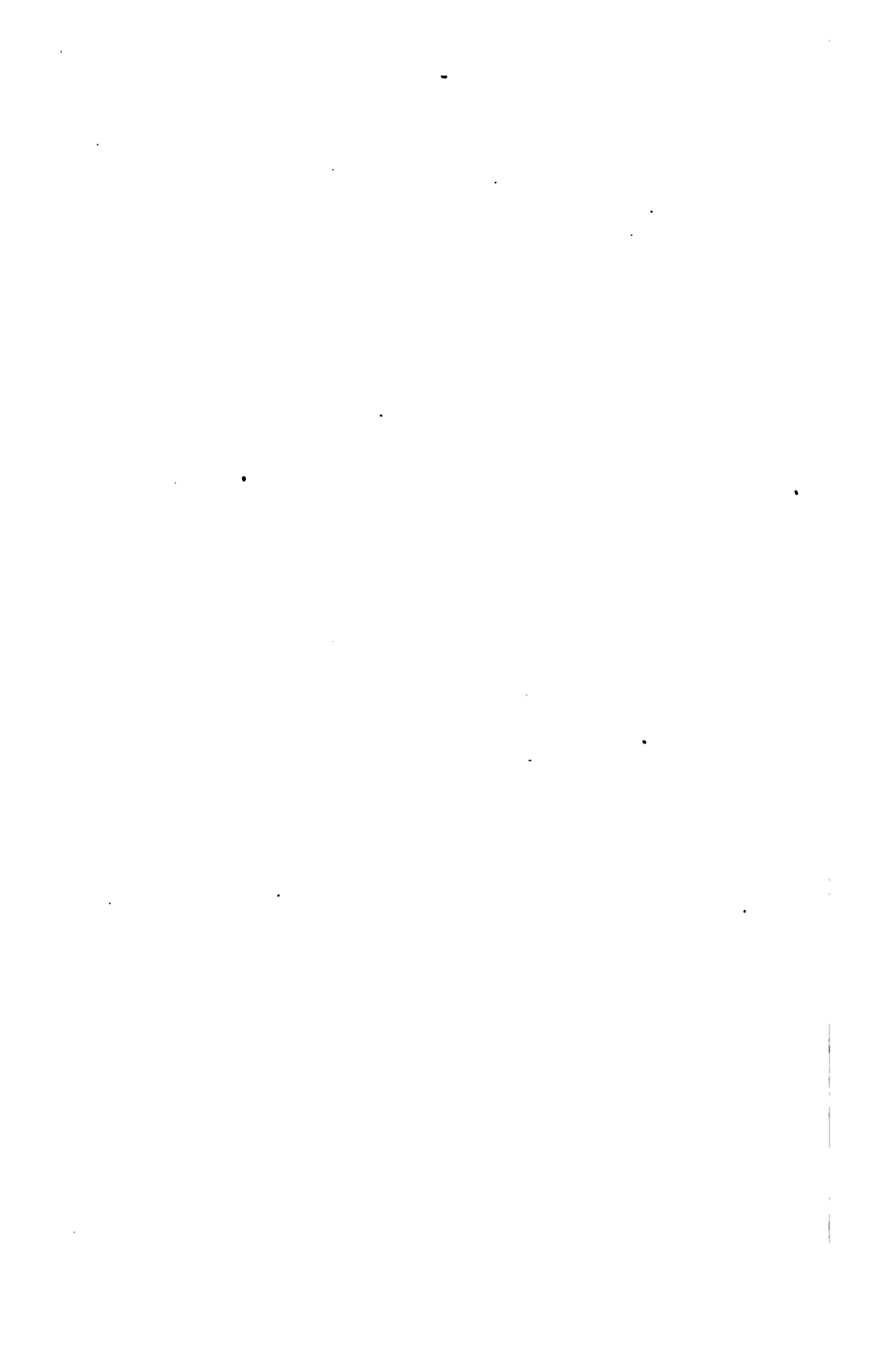
FUND FOR AGED AND INFIRM MINISTERS.

April 21, 1858. No additional Payments to this Fund—the Balance in Treasurer's hands being the same as last year, £3 10 0











**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

[illegible]

Form 410

